

Internet peer stumbled upon arms deal



Lord Avebury: trawled Sierra Leone website

THE role of Whitehall's sanctions-busting monitoring teams was cast in doubt yesterday when it emerged that it was a lone peer trawling the Internet who tipped off Robin Cook about a British company's involvement in a counter-coup in Sierra Leone last year.

Michael Evans on how Lord Avebury alerted Cook to potential breach of embargo

Secretary after studying the Sierra Leone website on the Internet. Mr Cook has announced that the Foreign Office is co-operating fully with Customs and Excise, which is investigating a possible breach of a United Nations arms embargo. The weapons were used by Nigerian and other West African troops to restore the legitimate leader of Sierra Leone after a counter-coup against the junta chief, the Sandhurst-trained Major Johnny Koromah. Mr Cook said he had approached Customs and Excise two months ago suggesting an investigation. Yesterday the

Foreign Office admitted that it was Lord Avebury's letter in February that had alerted the Foreign Secretary to the possible breach of the UN arms embargo. Lord Avebury said it was "extraordinary" that it was his intervention which had led to Mr Cook's action. It appeared, he said, "as if nothing has been learnt from the Scott inquiry into the arms-for-Iraq affair". Today Lord Avebury, formerly the Liberal MP Eric Lubbock, will be tabling a number of questions in the House of Lords about the affair.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, a former Scots Guards officer who runs Sandline International, based in Chelsea, has claimed that the deal was approved by officials. Lord Avebury said that the senior FCO Africa Department official he saw in February appeared to know nothing about the arms sale. After the arms-for-Iraq scandal, monitoring of all arms sales was supposed to have been tightened up. A Whitehall committee called the Restricted Enforcement Unit, the members of which include representatives of the intelligence services

and Customs, is responsible for overseeing all sensitive exports. The arms deal to return President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to power in Sierra Leone involved the purchase of weapons from Bulgaria. The arms were delivered to the Nigerian-led West African peacekeeping force, Ecomog, which was based in Liberia under a UN mandate. Lord Avebury said that the UN allowed arms to be sold to the peacekeeping force in Liberia, but not if they were then flown over the border into Sierra Leone. The arms deal was originally

arranged between President Kabbah and Rakesh Saxena, an Indian-born Thai banker, who agreed to underwrite the arms sale and to pay for the services of Sandline International, which was to provide weapons, logistics and intelligence for the counter-coup. Last night a spokeswoman for Colonel Spicer confirmed the involvement of Mr Saxena but said a contract was later signed between President Kabbah and Sandline. She said Mr Saxena had handed over an initial payment of \$1.5 million to Sandline but a second payment due of \$3.5 million for helicopters and heavier weaponry had not been paid.

Campaign to spread belief in the euro

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE first nationwide campaign to try to persuade voters to back Britain's entry into the European single currency will begin today. The drive by the cross-party European Movement follows last week's formal decision by 11 European Union states to join the euro from next January.

Business and trade union representatives will join politicians from the three main parties to start the campaign in London. Supporters include Chris Gent, the chief executive of Vodafone, and Ken Jackson, general secretary of the engineering union AEEU.

An information pack about the single currency and its implications for Britain will be distributed in 100 areas from May 9 - Europe Day. The movement's vice-presidents include Kenneth Clarke, the former Tory Chancellor, and Neil Kinnock, the former Labour leader.

The Government has said that any decision in principle to take Britain into the single currency would be subject to a referendum. Next week, Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, will address a conference organised by the European Movement to examine the impact on Britain of 25 years of EU membership. Other speakers will include Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader.

EURO SCORN

Continued from page 1
satellites come under pressure, it would move swiftly to raise interest rates.

German bonds fell by as much as half a point yesterday, reflecting fears of a more aggressive interest rate policy, but European stock markets jumped as Wall Street opened the week on a strong note.

The markets did not, however, signal any loss of faith in the euro by hammering the 11 euro currencies, as had been feared and the mark weakened only slightly.

European leaders nevertheless found themselves having to work to repair the damage from the ugly summit. In every state they were accused of bringing the euro into disrepute, with President Chirac bearing the brunt of the criticism.

Mr Blair, who will make a statement on the summit in the Commons today, was also widely rebuked for poor chairmanship and was criticised by Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Denmark and Ireland criticised him for failing to consult them during the marathon squabble.



CHRIS HARRIS



JONATHAN EVANS

It's good to talk: Yassir Arafat was only too happy to answer questions after his meeting in Downing Street yesterday, but Binyamin Netanyahu was more reluctant

Never mind the talks, who's paying for coffee?

Alan Hamilton spent a day outside some of London's finest addresses in his quest for Middle East peace

SHUTTLE diplomacy used to move between capitals. Yesterday, in a shrunken world, it moved around three London hotels barely a mile apart. Combatants and referees in the Middle East peace process descended on London in a last effort to shoulder the talks out of the muddy rut in which they had become mired. All chose the best of addresses; they could have talked at the American Embassy or Downing Street, but five-star hotels are more convincingly neutral. Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, holed up at the Churchill in Portman Square. Binyamin Netanyahu and the Israelis chose Grosvenor House in Park Lane, while Yassir Arafat and the Palestinian delegation went for Mayfair traditional, and booked into Claridges.

Even hotel diplomacy has its nuances. Ms Albright ventured the half mile by grey Mercedes from the Churchill to meet Mr Netanyahu on his temporary home ground in Park Lane. But Muhammad, in contrast, had to go to the mountain; Mr Arafat drove to the Churchill for his meeting with Ms Albright. An American television anchorman explained to viewers: "Madeline will always go to see BeeBee but everyone else has to go and see her." But first, other neutral ground. At 8.30am the Israeli delegation, consisting chiefly of security men in dark glasses and ill-fitting suits, swept into Downing Street in several Jaguars for an hour's meeting with Tony Blair, who greeted Mr Netanyahu on the doorstep, and Robin Cook,



Demonstrators in Whitehall missed Mr Netanyahu

who remained resolutely in the shadows within. The handshake was firm, if brief, and as they went through the door they hugged each other round the waist, as though preparing to get their heads down for a rugby scrum. The Israeli security men hung about outside, trying to look menacing alongside the hefty presence of Metropolitan Police, which

looked entirely relaxed. When he emerged, Mr Netanyahu looked a mite edgy and only grudgingly answered a few reporters' questions. The motorcade swept out again through the courtyard of the Foreign Office, neatly avoiding a small group of Palestinian demonstrators in Whitehall. Fifteen minutes later Mr Arafat and his team turned up

in a Jaguar, flying the Palestinian flag, and three Daimler stretch limos. Mr Blair, who is somewhat taller than Mr Arafat, gave him a rather longer handshake, but the two did not go for the scrum position. The Palestinians appeared much more relaxed over security. While their leaders talked inside, they left only two security men on the street outside, who did not once talk into their sleeves. Mr Arafat emerged an hour later and walked straight to the microphones. Speaking through an interpreter, he willingly answered questions, talking of continuing Israeli intransigence but thanking Mr Blair for his interest in the matter. Mr Netanyahu, meanwhile, arrived back at Grosvenor House just as the Palestinian motorcade was sweeping past on its way to Downing Street. Ms Albright arrived shortly before 10.30 and the parties remained in talks for 4½ hours, a process that included lunch. Israeli

spokesmen occasionally came out and made statements that gave nothing away. The *longueur* on the doorstep was relieved by an American reporter and a colleague who ventured inside and re-emerged sometime later ash-faced. "We just got charged £7 for two cups of coffee," he wailed. There was worse to come. Ms Albright eventually returned to the Churchill shortly after 3pm, evading the media horde. She thereby missed the sight of two other foreign reporters who had ventured within, only to suffer near-cardiac arrest. "Two coffees and two cheesecake kinda things - £17.50," one managed to croak. After what seemed an interminable wait, Mr Arafat and his motorcade roared into Portman Square. Ms Albright was waiting and they disappeared for another long session. If they happened to have coffee and cheesecake kinda things, it is to be hoped that the State Department will pick up the tab.

Minister rejects calls for a ban on boxing

By Polly Newton

TONY BANKS rejected calls to ban boxing yesterday and urged critics of the sport to recognise its benefits.

The Sports Minister said he had fought amateur bouts as a teenager and would not be swayed by the outcome of Saturday's European championship clash at the Royal Albert Hall, which has left Spencer Oliver, 22, critically ill in hospital.

Oliver underwent three hours of surgery to remove a blood clot from his brain after he was knocked out in the tenth round by Sergei Devakov, from the Ukraine. His condition was described yesterday as critical.

Doctors at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London were keeping him sedated and on a ventilator in the hope of stabilising his injuries. If he survives, there is a risk of permanent brain damage or paralysis.

James Palmer, the consultant neurosurgeon who operated on Oliver, said the boxer's family were with him and had appealed for privacy. Oliver, who has a two-year-old son with his partner, Louise, was recently named Young Boxer of the Year. He had won all of his previous 14 fights and was a favourite to retain the European super-bantamweight title.

Mr Banks, who said he had seen the match on Saturday, described how boxing as a teenager had boosted his self-confidence. He said he had fought regularly "for a couple of years" from the age of about 13, both at school and at a boxing club run by his father in Battersea Town Hall.

"It may come as a bit of a surprise, but I was actually very, very shy as a young child. It did give me self-confidence, not in the sense that I felt I could look after myself, but that I was reasonably good at something."

Mr Banks conceded there might be a case for re-examining safety procedures, but said he saw the benefits of boxing during regular visits to an east London gym. "I see a lot of youngsters down there keeping fit and being disciplined and, the more that they do things like that, the less likely they are to bung things into their bodies," he said.

A spokesman for the British Medical Association rejected the suggestion that boxing was beneficial. "The idea that if boxing did not exist, these youngsters would be on the streets or committing crime is false," he said.

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Grateful pupils helped to release hostages

Abducted teacher wants to return to Yemen, reports Daniel McGrory

DAVID MITCHELL, the English teacher who, with his wife and son, Ben, 14, Mr Mitchell, 48, said he was held for 17 days by rebel tribesmen in Yemen, told last night how a group of his Yemeni students secretly helped to secure his family's release.

Armed Beni Dabiyani tribesmen are thought to have held the family in the village of Knoum, in the Yemeni highlands, 100 miles from Sanaa, the capital.

When diplomatic efforts stalled and Yemeni troops threatened to storm the captors' hideout, the students acted as go-betweens.

As he prepared to fly home last night with his wife, Carolyn, and son, Ben, 14, Mr Mitchell, 48, said he was determined to return to Yemen "as soon as possible" to teach the students who had helped to end their captivity.

A close friend of the Mitchells, from Sidley, East Sussex, said: "The students are all very fond of David, as he is of them. They made it clear they wanted to do all they could to get him and his family back safely, so they carried messages and met face to face with those holding the Mitchells."

But joy at returning home was tinged with sadness. Embassy officials had to tell Mr Mitchell that his 81-year-old father, Gordon, had died. A letter telling Mr Mitchell of his father's death after a long



The Mitchell family, Carolyn, David and Ben

illness never reached him despite assurances from the authorities and kidnappers that messages to the family and medicine that Mrs Mitchell needed for a stomach illness were getting through.

Along with the students' contacts, the Mitchells' release came after Sheikh Mohammed al-Ruwaisan, a Yemeni businessman, gave their abductors a promise that they would not be prosecuted and that their demands would be considered by the Yemeni Government.

The tribesman had called for a cash ransom and the building of paved roads.

One friend of the Mitchells in Yemen said: "This is a very small, tight-knit society and it

They were extremely generous, very kind, very thoughtful and we never had any fear for our personal safety at any time," he said. "Our faith certainly helped us — and the fact that we were altogether."

Mr Mitchell disclosed how the family were kidnapped on April 17 as he drove his wife and son to the airport so that Ben could return to school in England. "Suddenly a Jeep sieged across the road in front of us. Four armed men jumped out and effectively blocked the road. As we saw them in front, my reaction was: 'Oh no! I know what's happening and it's happening to us.'"

The only violent incident happened when they were first ambushed and one of the gunmen hit his son across the face with his rifle butt. Diplomats praised Ben's courage and his parents said he had sustained their spirits.

David Pearce, deputy head of mission at the embassy, said: "The Mitchells are remarkably composed, in particular Ben, who is a credit to his parents. They dined with the ambassador and have slept well. They are holding up very well."

Large parts of Yemen are ruled by rebels. They have abducted 11 foreigners this year, demanding money or pressing for concessions from the Government. All the hostages were freed unharmed.

Gig racers find the conditions just swell

THOUSANDS of people packed the shorelines yesterday to watch contestants in the Cornish gig-racing festival battle through choppy seas and stiff nor'easter. The competition has grown from an interisland event into an international spectacle.

Over the Bank Holiday weekend, 54 gigs and 111 crews — some from as far afield as the United States — descended on the Isles of Scilly, 28 miles southwest of Land's End. The growing interest has forced the organisers of the championships to consider holding heats on the mainland.

The male and female champions of 1997 successfully defended their titles over the 2½-mile course. The Caradon Gig Club in Mary Newman won their fourth championship in a row, while the Farnmouth ladies' crew in *Idas* held off a strong challenge from the Dutch boat, *Neptunus*.

Pilot gig-racing has its origins in the days of sail. When a sailing ship approached port, she would require a local expert to steer the ship into dock past unmarked shoals and reefs.

The local pilots would all speed out in their wooden gigs, trying to be the first to reach the ship. Better charts and the advent of the motor ended the rush, but the tradition of gig rowing survived.



The Jubilee was one of more than 50 gigs at the Cornish championships

Boy, 10, sees father die in hitman attack

By LIN JENKINS AND RICHARD FORD

A BOY of 10 saw his father die, shot by a suspected contract killer on their doorstep in the police district with Britain's highest murder rate.

The victim, Robin Wood, 47, was a car dealer who was well-known to local police and to the Criminal Intelligence Unit, died in the hallway of his home at Northolt, West London. His son, Tom, was coming down the stairs after the knock on the door and saw his father lying fatally wounded.

Up to 20 hitmen are believed to be operating in the South East of England and have carried out a number of contract killings for between £1,000 and £20,000 a murder.

The Metropolitan Police area where Mr Wood died became Britain's murder capital after 53 people were killed there last year. The area includes tough estates as well as the leafier suburbs of Ealing, Harrow and Pinner. Most of the violence is concentrated in the triangle of Kilburn, Harlesden and Willesden and is linked to gangs fighting for supremacy in the drugs trade.

Yesterday police appealed for witnesses who might have seen anything suspicious in Kempton Avenue, Northolt, at about 10.30pm on Saturday. Police nicknamed the victim "Robber Woods", but the inquiry team declined to give details of his connections. Detective Chief Inspector Ken Rutland said that he had no idea of the motive.

The slim, fair-haired gunman had called at the family's

home and asked for Mr Wood, telling his partner, Katherine Pribisevic, to say that Terry wanted to speak to him. Mr Wood came out of the lounge, where he had been watching television. The gunman said nothing, but simply aimed a shotgun and fired once into Mr Wood's neck.

The gunman, who was aged 25 to 35, about 5ft 7in and wearing a dark anorak, ran off down the road.

Yesterday Miss Pribisevic went to the house briefly, to collect clothing, and provisions for her terrier. She and Tom, together with her other children, Natasha Wollaston, 20, and her 18-year-old brother, Robert, who is in Chelsea's youth squad, were staying with relatives.

Deborah Taylor, a neighbour, whose son, Ryan, plays with Tom, said: "It is horrendous. They were just an ordinary couple who kept themselves to themselves. It is the little boy I feel sorry for."

The family had lived in the former council house for about six years. Mr Wood's name does not appear on the last electoral roll of people eligible to vote, although his partner and the two older children were listed.

Another neighbour, who was sitting in the sunshine on the garden wall yesterday, watching her children play, said: "We all know each other in the street and the kids play together."

"When the CID man told me that Tom saw it, I felt terrible. The poor kid — just the thought of it."

Van driver is charged over death of family

By ROBIN YOUNG

POLICE have charged the driver of a van involved in a crash that killed three members of one family and left an injured eight-year-old girl an orphan.

The girl's mother, driving a Mini on the A20 at Smeeth, near Ashford, Kent, and her father were killed instantly in a collision with a Ford Transit. Paramedics tried to save the girl's 10-year-old brother, but he was pronounced dead on arrival at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

None of the dead have yet been named by the police, but the van driver, Martin Rose, 38, from Ashford, who suffered minor injuries, has been charged with failing to provide specimens at the hospital. He is expected to return to Ashford police station on Thursday.

The girl's condition was described as "critical but stable" in intensive care in hospital in London yesterday.

Inspector Phil Haynes, of Ashford police, said: "This is a terrible tragedy. We believe the van was travelling along the A20 and the Mini was crossing the main road, but the sequence of events remains unclear and we are continuing with our inquiries."

Residents of Smeeth have been campaigning to improve safety at the crossroads where the accident happened. Susan Cardwell, 50, who lives yards from the crash site, said: "We knew straight away that there had been an accident. We could hear a young child crying. It was so awful."

Briton who killed wife in US escapes electric chair

FROM EMILY COMPTON IN MIAMI

A BRITISH man who stabbed his estranged wife to death with a penknife escaped a death sentence in the United States yesterday.

Goronwy Olden, 44, could have been sent to die in Florida's electric chair for killing Janet Ferguson, but prosecutors agreed to a deal, giving him life in prison, after consulting her family in Britain and Jamaica. Tony Loe, Florida's Assistant State Attorney, said they had been seeking the death penalty, but the deal would give the family "the opportunity to start putting it behind them."

Olden pleaded guilty yesterday to a charge of second-degree murder with a deadly weapon. Ms Ferguson, 37, a mother of four, was stabbed 17 times in the driveway of a friend's home in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in June 1995.



Olden said he never meant to kill his wife

Olden, an electrician originally from Treomas, Mid Glamorgan, admitted last month that he had been "overcome by jealousy" when his wife told him that she had found someone else.

The couple met in

Birmingham in 1992. They married in 1994 and moved to the United States, but, within weeks, Olden was accusing his wife of being unfaithful. They split after a violent argument, which resulted in a domestic abuse conviction against Olden.

At Broward County Court yesterday, he spoke quietly to confirm his name and that he understood the plea deal. Before he was led away, Olden — who has been ordered to pay £3,000 restitution to his victim's family — said: "I never meant to do it and now everyone will know."

Last night Olden's mother, Rhiannon Evans — speaking at her home at Machen, near Caerphilly — said: "It is a tremendous relief to know he's not going to get the death penalty. It has been very hard for Janet's family. Now, for the rest of his life, he has to pay the price for what he has done."

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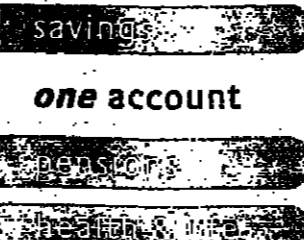
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Runners keep going on long road to peace

Foiled mortar attack fails to dissuade thousands from competing in Belfast marathon, writes Audrey Magee

THOUSANDS of runners competed in the Belfast marathon yesterday despite a foiled mortar attack by republican terrorists.

The marathon had to be rerouted after police discovered two mortar bombs close to the course. The devices, which had exploded, were directed at the Grosvenor Road police station in West Belfast.

Up to 100 houses were evacuated and the marathon was rerouted. "The runners didn't seem to mind. They fully understood and they were determined not to let it ruin anything," David Seaton of the marathon committee said. The new route added 18 metres to the race.

No group had admitted responsibility for the attack, which was being attributed to

breakaway republican terrorists opposed to the peace talks and ceasefire. Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, led the chorus of condemnation from unionist and nationalist politicians. He said: "Clearly we have nothing that remotely approaches peace. Here we have people out for a day's fun and what is the answer of the terrorists? They do what they can to disrupt and destroy."

The mortar attack was uncovered as a group of IRA dissidents claimed that a man shot dead by police in the Irish Republic on Friday was one of their members. The unnamed group telephoned the *Irish Times* in Belfast and, using a recognised codeword, said that Ronan McLoughlin was one of their members.

McLoughlin, 28, a former member of the IRA Dublin brigade, was shot during a raid on a security van in Ashford, Co Wicklow.

The new group of dissidents, which includes the IRA's former quartermaster general, is separate to the Continuity IRA, which formed shortly after the 1994 ceasefire and is linked to hardline members of Sinn Fein. The new group shares similar views to the 32 County Sovereignty Committee set up last year by Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, sister of Bobby Sands, the IRA hunger striker, as an alternative to Sinn Fein.

Both the committee and the new paramilitary dissidents oppose the involvement of Sinn Fein and the IRA in the peace talks. They are gather-



Competitors in the rerouted Belfast marathon — which gained 18 metres — watched by RUC officers after a mortar device was found earlier

ing more support each week and posing an increasing threat to the authority held by Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, over the Republican movement.

But Joe Dillon, spokesman for the committee, predictably denied any link between it and the new dissidents. "We have no links with any paramilitary groups. We are solely the 32 County Sovereignty Committee without a paramilitary wing. If other people sympathise with our group,

that is another matter," he said. Mr Dillon and other members of the committee will, however, attend McLoughlin's funeral in Dublin on Thursday. His mother, Roisin, who has been living abroad,

is also expected to attend. She is wanted by the RUC in connection with the IRA murders of three British soldiers in Belfast in 1973.

McLoughlin, who was 28, was one of six men involved in Friday's raid. The remaining five appeared at a special sitting of Dublin's Special Criminal Court yesterday and were charged with possession of firearms and intent to commit a robbery.

The five, all from Dublin, are Pascal Burke, 34; Stephen Carney, 22; Saoirse Breathnach, 19, the nephew of Lucilia Breathnach, who represented Sinn Fein at the talks in Downing Street; Philip Forsythe, 24; and Danny McAllister, 43. They were remanded in custody until May 19.

The Belfast-to-Dublin railway line between was closed yesterday after police found traces of a small explosion on the line between Newry and Dundalk.

A caller to a Belfast newsroom said that two devices had been planted on the line. Remnants of a device were found on the track at Red Bridge, Co Down. The line was closed off last night and trains diverted as police searched for the claimed second device.

Republic releases 3 IRA men

THE IRA terrorist who allegedly masterminded the 1994 mortar attacks on Heathrow has been released from prison in the Irish Republic as part of the peace process (Audrey Magee writes).

Charles Chambers, 43, from Dublin, was one of three IRA men released from Portlaoise prison last weekend. He was sentenced in 1974 for possession of IRA incendiary devices.

Police told the court that Chambers had masterminded the mortar attacks on Heathrow before the terrorists called a ceasefire in August 1994.

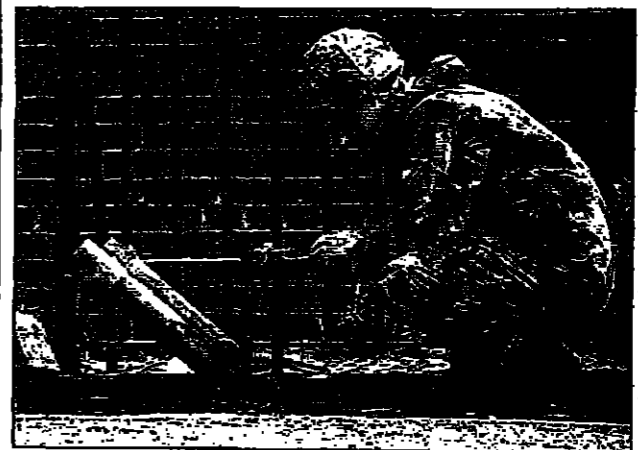
The other two men released are Andrew Gillespie, 74, from Ballybofey, Co Donegal, serving 12 years for possessing explosives, and Mathew Hennessy, 40, from Dublin, serving ten years for possessing mortar parts.

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A bomb disposal expert examining mortar tubes

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Superdad: a mix of Billy Connolly and Dr Spock

Philip Delves Broughton on child psychologist who aims to set men along the road to good fatherhood

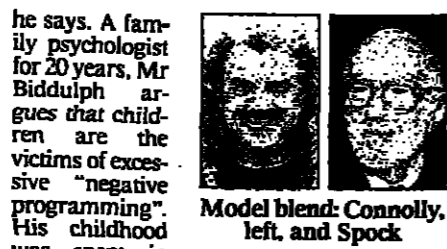
AN AUSTRALIAN who did not talk to his father for 15 years is visiting Britain to advise parents on how to raise boys, and fathers on how to reclaim manhood.

Steve Biddulph, 44, is a publishing phenomenon and Britain is one of the last countries to fall for his folksy guides such as the multi-million-selling *The Secret of Happy Children* and the latest, *Raising Boys*. A speech that Mr Biddulph is giving to parents in London tonight is a sell-out.

Behind his self-effacing, softly spoken manner is a determination to have the next several generations of British, Australian and even Chinese children brought up the Biddulph way.

He fancies himself the natural heir to Benjamin Spock and describes his style of advice as a mixture of Dr Spock and Billy Connolly. He uses comedic routines and theatrical scenes to put across his message.

He insists that modern fathers spend too little time with their children, their sons in particular. Anglo-Saxons, he claims, are especially guilty because they compound their negligence with an awkwardness about offering praise and encouragement to their children while being too ready to punish and chide them. Too much stick, not enough carrot,



Model blend: Connolly, left, and Spock

he says. A family psychologist for 20 years, Mr Biddulph argues that children are the victims of excessive "negative programming". His childhood was spent in Yorkshire, where his father, a draughtsman, was typically Anglo-Saxon.

"Yorkshire was the world capital of negative parenting," he says. "I didn't speak to my father for 15 years, but when I came to write my books I consulted him and we have been good friends since."

His best-selling book is *Manhood*, in which he argues that the traditional Australian notion of "mateship", an aggressive sort of blokish male bonding, is out of date and no substitute for close emotional relationships between men and between fathers and sons.

His books are sold through supermarkets and newsagents, rather than just book-sellers, as research has shown that two thirds of Australian parents have never visited a

bookshop. Mr Biddulph's key message is that men who work 35 hours a week are failing as fathers. He claims that the average father spends no more than eight minutes a day with his children. Last week he addressed the all-party parliamentary committee on parenting to tell them that he thought boys in Britain started school too early and that they should start a year later than girls, whose brains and emotions developed earlier and faster.

"We are living in the most underfunded generation ever," he says. He adds that, in the pre-industrial world, fathers were far more important than they now because of the high maternal death rate. That position, however, had been seriously undermined. "Only one in ten men get on well with their father."

Rough and tumble, he argues, is good, as it teaches boys how to keep their temper. But, sadly, most fathers have

become nothing more than a "walking wallet" with a burdensome family but no close friends or creative outlets.

But all is not doom and gloom. Mr Biddulph perceives a renaissance, with some fathers prepared to be the "at-home" parent and many boys wanting to be better fathers than their own fathers were.

Raising Boys, his third book, has spent 36 weeks in Australia's top ten for non-fiction. The book, subtitled *Why boys are different — and how to help them become happy and well-balanced men*, has sold more than 155,000 copies since it came on the market. *Manhood* has enjoyed a resurgence on the back of the success of *Raising Boys* — it has sold more copies since *Raising Boys* was published than it had done previously.

In his introduction to *Raising Boys*, Mr Biddulph writes: "In writing a book about boys and their special needs, I wish in no way to take away from the efforts being made everywhere to advance women and girls. But it's painfully clear (to anyone who opens a newspaper) that boys are hurting too. A better world depends on making all groups happier and healthier. If we want more good men in the world, we must start treating boys with less blame and more understanding."



Steve Biddulph: believes modern fathers spend too little time with their sons

'Parents should be held for therapy'

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE police should be given powers to detain violent or irresponsible parents for compulsory counselling and therapy sessions, a report by Ed Straw, the Home Secretary's brother, will recommend today.

The study, published by the left-leaning think-tank Demos, also suggests that parenting skills be taught to children in school and calls for two hours of parent education on television a week.

Soap operas should also be encouraged to include more positive examples of families, while an independent National Relationship and Parenting Service should be created, the report will say.

Mr Straw, chairman of the marriage guidance organisation Relate, said: "We already know a great deal about how to make relationships more fulfilling and how to help families communicate better. What we need to do now is to disseminate this body of skills and knowledge more widely."

Dealing with the fall-out from broken homes cost the taxpayer an estimated £4 billion a year, Mr Straw added. Where family breakdown involved domestic violence or sex, alcohol, drugs or child abuse, "police could have powers to hold people for counselling, rather than simply keeping them in custody", he said.

Mr Straw, a management consultant with Coopers & Lybrand, recommends the creation of a pilot scheme in which one town in Britain would be chosen to test "the social and economic benefits" of his proposals.

His recommendations, published to coincide with National Parenting Day today, are likely to be closely scrutinised by ministers. The Cabinet is already considering proposals put forward by the Home Secretary, to fund a network of voluntary parenting classes and telephone hotlines to advise on child-rearing.

ADVICE FOR FATHERS

- 1 Make the time to be a dad. Men are often little more than work machines. You have to fight to be a real father.
- 2 Be active with your children — talk, play, make things, go on trips together. Take every chance to interact.
- 3 Sometimes Attention Deficit Disorder is actually Dad Deficit Disorder.
- 4 Share the discipline with your partner. Often your son will respond more easily to you — not from fear, but from respect and wanting to please you. Don't hit or frighten boys — it just makes them mean to others.
- 5 A boy will copy you. He will copy how you act towards his mother. He will take on your attitudes (whether you are a racist, a perpetual victim, an optimist or a person who cares about justice, and so on). He will be able to show his emotions only if you can show yours.
- 6 Most boys love rough-and-tumble games. Use these for enjoyment and to teach him self-control, by stopping and setting some rules whenever the game gets too rough.
- 7 Teach your son to respect women — and to respect himself.

ADVICE FOR MOTHERS

- 1 Giving birth to a boy brings to the surface how you feel about males in general. Be careful not to land too many prejudices on to this innocent little boy.
- 2 If you aren't experienced with males (such as growing up with brothers) then ask men to tell you what it's like being male. Don't be afraid of little boys' bodies!
- 3 Little boys learn love from their mothers. Be kind and warm, and enjoy them.
- 4 Teach your boy about girls and how to get along well with them.
- 5 Praise your son's looks and conversation so that he feels good about himself.
- 6 Adjust your parenting as your son gets older. Keep a close eye on safety and the healthy balance of his life, stepping back more as he gets into his teens. But never lose contact with his world, his concerns and whether he is getting out of his depth.
- 7 In adolescence, let him learn from the consequences of his actions or inactions, such as being late for school if he dawdles. This is the age for learning about responsibility.

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Poor choice of location.



Taking cash out of the business too early.



Not moving with the times.

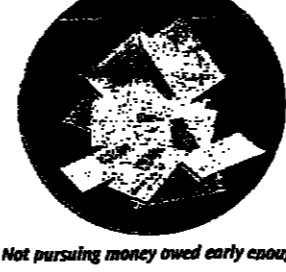
CONSIDER THEM YOUR ENEMIES.



Under/Over pricing.



Over-optimism.

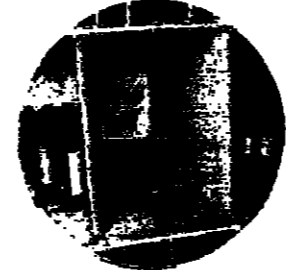


Not pursuing money owed early enough.

WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO SPOT THEM AND ACT ON THEM?



Health problems of the owner.



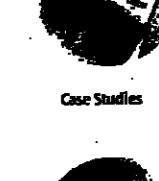
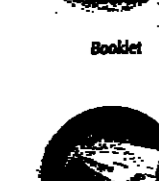
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Highland clearance rouses rebels

Ministers rally to support of hut owners facing eviction after rent dispute, reports Shirley English

A HOLIDAY village set up by a Scottish laird 80 years ago to provide a country retreat for the poor of Clydeside has become the focus of what is being called a modern-day Highland clearance.

More than 100 families are facing eviction this month from the simple green wooden huts at Carbeth Estate in Stirlingshire where they have holidayed for years. The move by Allan Barns-Graham, the laird, follows a year-long rent strike by the hut owners, who objected to a 42 per cent rise in ground rent and service charges. They claimed that the rise was aimed at pricing them out to make way for a more upmarket tourist development.

Eviction notices were nailed to the doors of the huts two months ago and the first group of families, many of them pensioners, will be told to get out by May 15. But the hut owners are fighting back with a campaign that has won

them the support of MPs and Scottish Office ministers.

The huts at Carbeth were the result of a social experiment started in the 1920s by the grandfather of the current laird, also called Allan Barns-Graham. After the First World War he invited returning ex-servicemen to construct holiday huts on his land for a nominal ground rent.

The huts belonged to the families who built them and were passed down through the generations. The owners' right to remain on the estate was enshrined in the old laird's will before he died in 1957. However, the lease for the land that the hut owners signed meant that they had no tenants' rights and could be told to go without explanation at 40 days' notice.

It is the lack of security of tenure and the ability of lairds to impose rent rises without consultation that the Carbeth residents are fighting. Their case reaches the courts next month; a petition calling for a halt to the "Carbeth Clearances" has already collected 7,000 signatures and will be handed into Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, at the end of this month.

The Carbeth Hutters Association has also met the Islanders of Eigg and the Assynt Crofters to seek advice on how to organise a community buyout of the 180 acres of the 1,000-acre estate on which the huts stand.

In the meantime, Calum MacDonald, a Scottish Office minister, has asked Historic Scotland, the Government's



Archie and Isobel Robertson at their simple four-room wooden hut on the Carbeth Estate, which to them is "like Buckingham Palace"



Barns-Graham: plans a modern development

advisory body on built heritage, to investigate the possibility of formally listing the huts as historic monuments.

Yesterday Tommy Kirkwood, 56, a retired shipyard worker who lives in a Clydebank council house and is chairman of the Carbeth Hutters Association, said: "Most of us would give up our

homes before we would give up our huts at Carbeth. Some have been in families for generations. People have scattered their relatives' ashes here."

Isobel and Archie Robertson, from Glasgow, first holidayed at Carbeth in 1949 in their four-room hut. Like all the huts at Carbeth, it has

changed little since then, and has no electricity or running water. Mrs Robertson, 77, said: "If we lose our hut, it will break our hearts. It might not be everyone's taste, but it's Buckingham Palace to us."

But not all the hutners at Carbeth sympathise with the dispute. At the moment 110 of the 170 huts, which are worth

between £1,000 and £2,000, are involved in the rent strike. They should have been paying from £672 to £1,000 a year. Those who are paying argue that the fees are reasonable compared with the cost of most holidays.

One woman, who bought a hut two years ago, said: "Mr Barns-Graham is running a

business. You can't expect to accept the wages of today and pay the rents of yesteryear."

Mr Barns-Graham, an accountant, has started to build chalets on the estate and has planning permission to construct up to eight houses. It is understood that he also plans to open a restaurant and a club.

Law lord predicts political pressure in courts

BY FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A LAW lord has forecast that plans to allow staff lawyers from the Crown Prosecution Service to present cases in the Crown Courts could threaten the political independence of the justice system.

Legislation is expected this autumn to lift a ban on "employed" lawyers in the CPS prosecuting the most serious criminal cases. Lord Saville says there is a danger that prosecutors could come under "short-term political or economic pressures" to achieve results.

The plan is likely to run into fierce opposition from some senior judges and the Bar, although it is strongly supported by the CPS and by the Law Society, which represents solicitors. The Bar has fought to preserve its near-monopoly of Crown Court advocacy.

At present, the Lord Chief Justice and four other senior judges retain the final say over rights of audience. At the heart of the consultative machinery is the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee, which Lord Saville chaired for four months until he was appointed to the Bloody Sunday inquiry earlier this year. No successor has been appointed.

He said: "If you abolish the advisory committee, and nothing is put in its place, you take away from the judges the final say on who should have rights of audience in their courts and you give it to the Government of the day or the administration."

This posed "a serious risk to judicial independence in a democracy which believes in the separation of powers", he said. Lord Saville acknowledged that the machinery had become over-bureaucratic, but that was the fault of procedures rather than the committee itself.

Lawyers might face political or other pressures if they were appointed by the administration "or worse, the Government of the day, driven by short-term political considerations."

The CPS employs about 2,000 lawyers — two thirds solicitors, one third barristers. A spokesman said the plan did not involve all cases. However, there would be better-quality work with the same lawyers seeing cases through from start to finish.

New angle on fish rivals

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

MOST of the fish-guzzling cormorants competing with anglers for their catch on inland lakes and rivers are colonists from the Continent, scientists have found.

It had been thought that the birds were natives driven inland by coastal pollution and a decline in food stocks at sea. Now DNA analysis has

shown that the rapidly increasing inland birds are from the Eurasian sub-species, *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*, which is slightly smaller than the North Atlantic variety, *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*, long familiar in Britain.

Numbers of Eurasian cormorants have been increasing at about 16 per cent a year, and they prefer inland sites. British cormorant numbers were thought to be rising by up to 3

per cent a year. David Carrs, a vertebrate ecologist at the Institute for Terrestrial Ecology at Banchory, Grampian, conducted the tests in collaboration with molecular geneticists at Aberdeen University.

Dr Carrs said: "Clearly, the potential is there for growing numbers of cormorants from the Continent to establish themselves here permanently on lakes, wetlands and river systems."

Moving pictures come to the isles

BY GILLIAN HARRIS, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

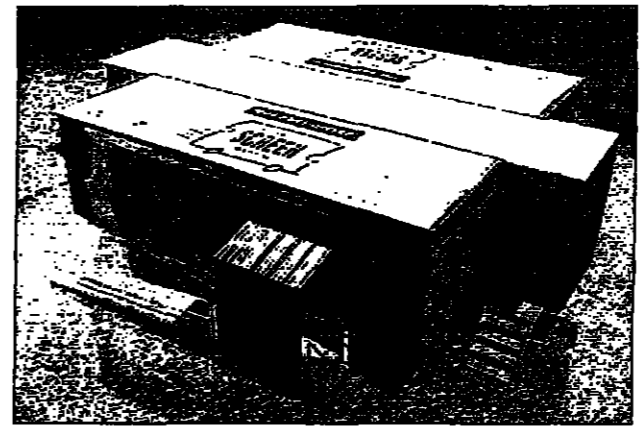
BRITAIN'S first mobile cinema, which opens today, will bring cultural relief to a population which has to travel up to 200 miles to watch the latest films.

After its debut on the Hebridean island of Islay, the Screen Machine will wend its way around villages showing recent releases such as *Good Will Hunting*, *Mrs Brown*

and *Anastasia*. Such is the demand for tickets that many of the screenings are already sold out.

From the outside, the £660,000 cinema, the second of its kind in the world, looks like a supermarket delivery lorry. But the custom-built vehicle, which has been designed to negotiate twists and turns in the single-track roads, unfolds to form a 110-seater cinema with air-conditioning, central heating and carpeted walls.

Its arrival is long overdue in the Highlands, which covers an area the size of Belgium but has only six cinemas. Jamie Wilson, 22, from Cairness, is typical of many of the cinema's potential customers. He has to make a 200-mile round trip to Inverness when he wants to see a film. "Going to a movie is not exactly a spur-of-the-moment thing



The mobile cinema unfolds from an articulated lorry

when you're talking about a four-hour drive," he said. "It's about time we had access to the latest film releases. I'm sick of waiting for films to come out on video when everyone else has seen them."

Andrew Jarvie, of the development agency Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which

has invested in the cinema, said: "There has been massive interest from the communities and an obvious need for something like this. We will run the films that people want to see, which will be mostly Hollywood blockbusters."

Leading article, page 21

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Thinking outside the box

Poet's threat by death poison

Concer Caribbean

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The scheme... which is expected... only next year... making in on the... market for launch... municipalities and... these satellites...

But critics fear... being evaluated by... National Space Centre... is part of the... Trade and Industry... damage rare breeding... of seabirds and... world's rarest lizard... is on Sombroero Island... a 20-mile-wide spot 22 miles... of the main Argentinian... island. Sombroero is... and save for a few...

In location has made... of the last and best... the region for arrival... species of nesting... during rare black-capped... and brown pelicans... There is also the black... among corvids, which... found on Sombroero... whose habitats and numbers... are unknown.

Jim Stevenson, global... programme officer at the Royal... Society for the Protection of... Birds said yesterday: "We are..."

كندا من الأصل

Poet's lake threatened by deadly poisons

Sewage and farm waste empty into beauty spot, writes Russell Jenkins

GRASMERE, the lake beside which Wordsworth wrote *I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud*, is in danger of dying from pollution. It is being poisoned by phosphate produced by an inadequate sewage system and farm waste from the fells. Tourists visiting the mile-long lake and Wordsworth's cottage near the village of Grasmere, may notice only a few tell-tale algae blooms but, beneath the surface, toxic pollutants are attacking fish and fauna.

In the summer, the lake draws thousands of walkers, families and literary buffs anxious to retrace the footsteps of Wordsworth, his sister Dorothy and their friend Coleridge, who lived near by at Keswick. Many will go for a swim in the cool waters without realising the dangers. Residents of the village fear that it will become a dead lake, unable to sustain any life apart from blue-green algae, if radical work is not carried out to restore the natural eco-

system. It is an ever-present problem in the Lakes: remedial work has already been carried out to save Windermere and Derwent Water. But it has come too late to save Elter Water, whose main basin is heavily polluted.

There are still trout, freshwater fish and plant life in Grasmere, but people are worried. At a recent public meeting, residents heard that the main problem stemmed from 30 years of pollution from inadequate sewage treatment.

Ann Parker, a Cumbria county councillor, said raw sewage was going into the lake all the time and could be seen in certain conditions. Locals were concerned about the condition of the lake. "Gradually it will deteriorate. There is already concern from the Environment Agency about the quality of the water. Grasmere is an absolute Mecca in the summer months for people who want to go swimming." A recent public meeting heard representatives of



Grasmere, where William and Dorothy Wordsworth lived, is being poisoned by phosphate and farm waste. Residents fear it will soon be unable to support life

North West Water and the Environment Agency explain that the sewage treatment plant, built in 1972, could not cope with the flow. The sewer pipes were laid so badly that water floods into one small section of the sewers at a rate of 42 metric tonnes an hour. The overloading means raw

sewage shoots down an overflow pipe into the lake even in dry weather.

Leaks account for much of the excess water, but attempts by North West Water to examine the system using robot-controlled television cameras have been unsuccessful because the pipes have

been too full of water, even on dry days. Paul Wiggins, an Environment Agency team leader, said: "Quite simply, we are concerned about Grasmere and, because of this, we have been talking to North West Water to agree a package of works. We do not want it to get to the state where it is in

terminal decline. Algae will proliferate in any lake where there is a build-up of nutrients, primarily phosphorous. Grasmere has life. It is not as if it is dead or anything like that, but we don't want it to go that way."

The algae blooms can eventually be cleared up if phos-

phate-stripping equipment is installed, but first North West Water is carrying out remedial work to the treatment works. A spokeswoman said that engineers were working on the screening process to improve reliability. "We are carrying out permanent improvements to the treatment works. Our

project engineers are investigating what we can do." Meanwhile, residents have formed the Clean Lake for Grasmere group to ensure the work is carried out. Mrs Parker said: "It could be 10 or 15 years before Elter Water recovers. We don't want Grasmere going the same way."



Sombbrero's remote location has made it an ideal home for rare nesting birds

Concern at plans for Caribbean rocket pad

By Nick Nuttall and Michael Brooke

A ROCKET launching pad is being planned by the Government in the British territory of Anguilla in the outback of conservationists.

The scheme, construction of which is expected to start early next year, is aimed at cashing in on the growing market for launching telecommunications and mobile telephone satellites.

But critics fear the scheme, being evaluated by the British National Space Centre, which is part of the Department of Trade and Industry, could damage rare breeding colonies of seabirds and one of the world's rarest lizards. The site is on Sombbrero island, a tiny, mile-wide spot 32 miles north-west of the main Anguillian island. Sombbrero is uninhabited save for a few lighthouse keepers.

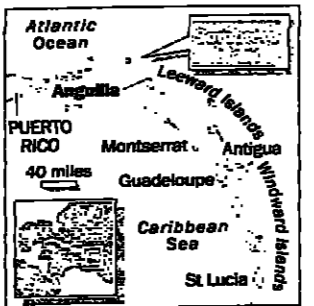
Its location has made it one of the last and best homes in the region for around 11 species of nesting birds including rare black-capped petrels and brown pelicans. There is also the black lizard *Ameiva corvina*, which is found on Sombbrero and whose habitats and numbers are unknown.

Jim Stevenson, global programmes officer at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said yesterday: "We are

concerned that this development will devastate what is one of the largest seabird colonies in the Caribbean."

Betty Anne Schreiber, a leading ornithologist at the Smithsonian Institution and president of Seabird Research in Alexandria, Vermont, said she feared the launches and airstrip planned would be very damaging.

"Sombbrero island provides



one of the last remaining refuges for seabirds in the Caribbean where they can nest safe from human disturbance and development. With the loss of this island as a nesting sanctuary, seabirds will be in more trouble in the Caribbean where numbers are about 10 per cent of what they used to be," she said.

The rocket pad is being promoted by Beal Aerospace

of Dallas, Texas, which has pledged \$250 million (£150 million) to build and launch commercial rockets from the island within the next two years. The company, owned by the American private bank owner and entrepreneur Andrew Beal, has hired a 50-strong staff of mainly former NASA, Boeing and Lockheed engineers and technicians and has leased a 124-acre plot at a US Navy base in McGregor, Texas, to test the motors on its three-stage rocket. These will be shipped out to the Caribbean.

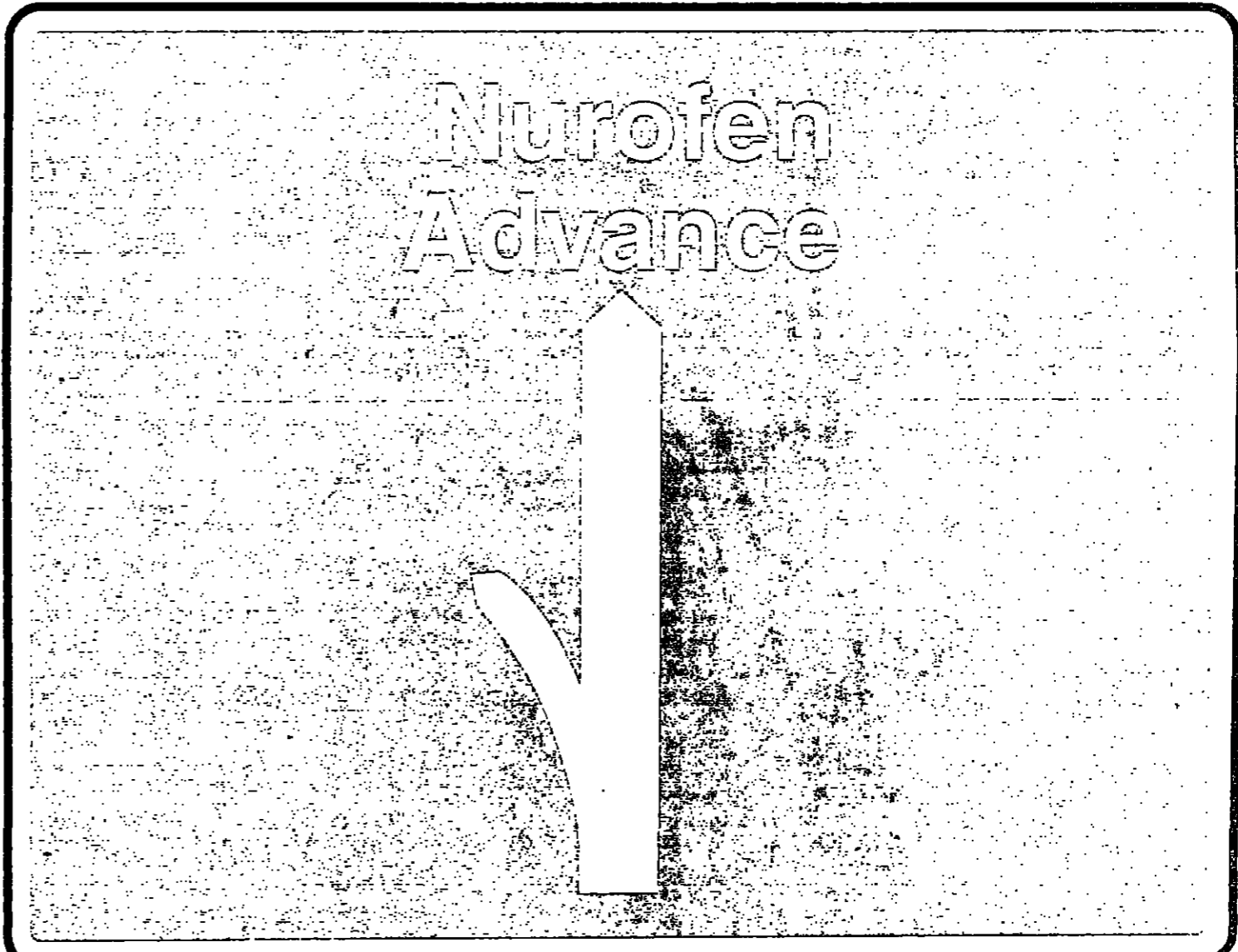
David Baker, a Beal spokesman, said yesterday that the launchpad would bring work and skills in fields from computing to engineering to a developing part of the Caribbean. "Most of the workforce will be hired from the 9,500 strong Anguillian population," he said.

The company has the support of the Anguillian Government, which has leased the island to Beal, and has hired a firm of environmental experts to carry out an environmental impact assessment.

Dr Schreiber said she was concerned that the study, being undertaken this month, would miss the seabirds' breeding season. She said she had offered to go with the experts, but claimed that Beal refused. "They said it would set a bad precedent and other groups would want to go. The island is inaccessible without a good-sized boat, so it is not the kind of thing you can do on your own," Dr Schreiber added.

Mr Baker said he was aware of environmentalists' concerns but said they were being over-pessimistic.

Adrian Pinder of the British National Space Centre said: "We were approached by Beal about eight months ago and are co-ordinating the UK position."



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Labour pins election hopes on high turnout

Past council scandals could hit the party hard, reports Jill Sherman

LABOUR is facing a number of damaging defeats in traditional strongholds in the council elections on Thursday unless it is saved by a higher-than-expected turnout.

The party risks losing heartland councils such as Sheffield, Liverpool, Doncaster, Hackney and Islington in the elections, which could see significant gains for the Liberal Democrats and even some for the Conservatives.

The Liberal Democrats appear to have a good chance of wresting control from Labour in Southwark, due to effective targeting and the high profile of the local Liberal Democrat MP, Simon Hughes. Labour has held the borough since 1971, but has lost many of its seats in recent years. It has 35, to the Liberal Democrats' 24 and the Tories' three.

Labour strategists concede that seats in Liverpool, Sheffield and Doncaster — still reeling from the councillors' expenses scandal — are vulnerable, but they suspect that Liberal Democrats will not succeed in taking overall con-

trol. Hackney, where the Labour group is split, and Islington, run by the Social Democratic Party in the early 1980s, are "too close to call". Labour is hoping for a high turnout of 30-40 per cent. In 1994, when it gained a net 150 seats, the turnout was an average of 46 per cent. Local by-elections, however, have



Ashdown: portrayed as one-man band by Labour

produced turnouts of less than 20 per cent. Party managers hope that the poll on a London-wide assembly and a directly elected mayor being held on the same day will encourage more people to the polling booth.

Nearly 20 million electors will be eligible to vote for 4,000-plus seats up and down the country, with more than half the seats held by Labour. Elections will take place in all 32 London boroughs, all 36 metropolitan authorities outside the capital, more than 80 shire districts and ten of the new unitary authorities.

Yesterday all three main parties were stepping up their campaigns with William Hague out in Croydon, a council which the Tories could snatch from Labour with only a 2 per cent swing.

The Conservative leader said that Labour had a record of incompetence in Croydon of which it should be ashamed.

He pointed out that council tax had risen by a third in four years of Labour rule, a theme on which the Conservatives have focused.

Other possible Tory gains include Brent, Hillingdon and Redbridge. The Liberal Democrats could also lose control to the Tories in Kingston.

Labour strategists dismiss reports that the Tories risk losing Wandsworth or Westminster, though the Conservatives are doing their best to play down their prospects on Thursday. Out of the 166 councils with elections, Labour has majority control in more than 90, compared with just over 20 in Liberal Democrat hands and just seven run by the Tories. Forty-six other councils are under the control of no single party.

The polls could prove a test for relations between the Liberal Democrats and Labour. Labour has targeted the Liberal Democrats, but has tried to persuade voters that Paddy Ashdown is a one-man band with whom Labour can do business, unlike the rest of his party.



Hugh Grant with Glenda Jackson yesterday. His film is untitled, and she won't say if she is seeking a new job

Politician looks for picture opportunity

GLENDIA JACKSON was in the market for picture opportunities yesterday. The Oscar-winning actress turned politician was promoting the role that a London mayor could have in bringing more film-making to the streets of the capital, and went to watch the sequel to *Four Weddings and a Funeral* being shot in a recreated Portobello Market at Notting Hill.

She had decided to stand as mayor, saying that at the moment she was concentrating on getting voters to turn out for Thursday's referendum. The mayor's office would have responsibility for issues such as transport, which is one of the major headaches for making films.

The actor Hugh Grant gave a bouquet to Miss Jackson, the London Transport Minister. As yet, the film is untitled.

She would not say whether

Kaufman attacks 'conniving' MPs

BY A CORRESPONDENT

SOME MPs humiliate themselves simply to get their faces on a television screen, Gerald Kaufman said yesterday. The former minister also accused some MPs of "conniving with broadcasters to trivialise Parliament".

Mr Kaufman, chairman of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, was asked on the Press Association's Inside Parliament Website whether he thought MPs were at all to blame for the way in which, it is alleged, some of the focus had been taken off the Chamber of the Commons by an increasing number of morning committees and press conferences. Mr Kaufman, a former parliamentary

journalist, said: "No, you cannot blame MPs because MPs are doing their job. The select committees do a useful job. The Chamber is where decisions are made. The Chamber has overturned Governments and overturned important government policies."

"Where I do criticise MPs is in conniving with broadcasters to trivialise Parliament, for example by doing interviews that they know are going to be turned into soundbites."

"I, rather arrogantly, completely refuse to do that. But I do believe that MPs will too often humiliate themselves, debase themselves to get their faces seen on a television screen for a second or two."

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مكتبة من الأصل

Baby comes too as EU ministers meet

Valerie Elliott talks to the Swedish MP who has put family values first

A BABY boy will be among official delegates attending the first European Union Ministers for Women conference, hosted by Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, in Belfast today.

Her seven-year-old son will accompany his mother, Ulrica Messing, 30, Sweden's Employment and Women's Minister, on her first official day back at work after maternity leave.

She does not employ a nanny, but a political aide has promised to help look after Oscar for the two-day conference. Miss Messing is to address colleagues tomorrow and will focus on men's role in bringing up children.

Her partner, Anders Uhlinder, 33, is an electrical engineer for the telecommunications firm Ericsson. From August he is to take a year's leave to care for his young son.

In Sweden couples are allowed to take up to 365 days' leave between them to care for a newborn baby. Miss Messing, however, has taken no extra leave because she has

been able to work from home in Gavle, 70 miles north of Stockholm. The Government has provided her with the latest homeworking technology — a computer with camera — so she has been able to deal with her paperwork and hold regular video conferences with civil servants, fellow ministers or political advisers.

She believes women can succeed only if they have similarly good employers. "They can help you or they can hinder you. My Prime Minister is very supportive. It is not an easy thing for me to do and he accepts that." She intends to work more regularly in her Stockholm office from this week.

them — for example, men and women are allowed to take time off work to care for a sick child under 12.

Her next campaign in Sweden is to highlight the importance of such flexible laws. "I want people to understand that it is better for the future of the country if our children are well cared for."

The minister is popular in Sweden. She won considerable sympathy when she fought a bitter legal battle with her ex-husband for custody of her eldest son. She has been an active Social Democrat since the age of 15 and then worked with young people with drugs problems before becoming an MP.

She said last night: "I know there are some people who don't approve of what I do, or they think I am too young for politics. But I believe in politics and I believe young people should be involved in politics."

As for her own mother's opinion of her bringing Oscar to Belfast, Miss Messing said: "I think she thinks it's okay, but thinks I work too hard anyway."



Ulrica Messing wants to highlight how she combines politics and motherhood

Employees giving up work well before 65

BY A CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE are increasingly opting to take early retirement, according to a survey. Some 80 per cent of employees at leading companies stopped working last year before normal retiring age. More than 70 per cent left before they reached 60.

The report, from Incomes Data Services, said that at some companies, including Imperial Tobacco, Alliance & Leicester and Royal Bank of Scotland, most employees quit before reaching 54.

Helen Sudell, of the IDS pensions service, said: "We are finding that the trend is particularly for men to retire early. They tend to have the best pension arrangements as they have generally not had career breaks to have children like their female counterparts."

Since the 1980s, companies have used early retirement schemes as an alternative to making people redundant as they try to cut salary costs and improve efficiency.

But IDS said companies ran a risk of losing the expertise of their older employees, which could damage their businesses.

Boarding school choice dictated by friendliness

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

PARENTS choosing a boarding education look for friendly schools that fit in with modern lifestyles and question the value of tradition and religion.

The largest ever survey of boarding parents shows that rather than seeking famous names, they want the more flexible arrangements introduced by many less well-known independent schools.

Families demand easy access to their children, by telephone or through regular visits, as well as a choice of adults at school with whom their children can discuss personal problems.

A random sample of 750 parents showed that some of the features traditionally emphasised by boarding schools are no longer among parents' top priorities. Fewer than half were concerned about the religious character or distance from home of their children's school and fewer than one in five was swayed by the findings of external inspections.

Most parents said their children were more mature since starting to board. The findings contradict those of a

smaller poll of the parents of teenagers carried out at a London conference, where a majority felt that they were excluded from important decisions and only informed about problems when they reached crisis proportions.

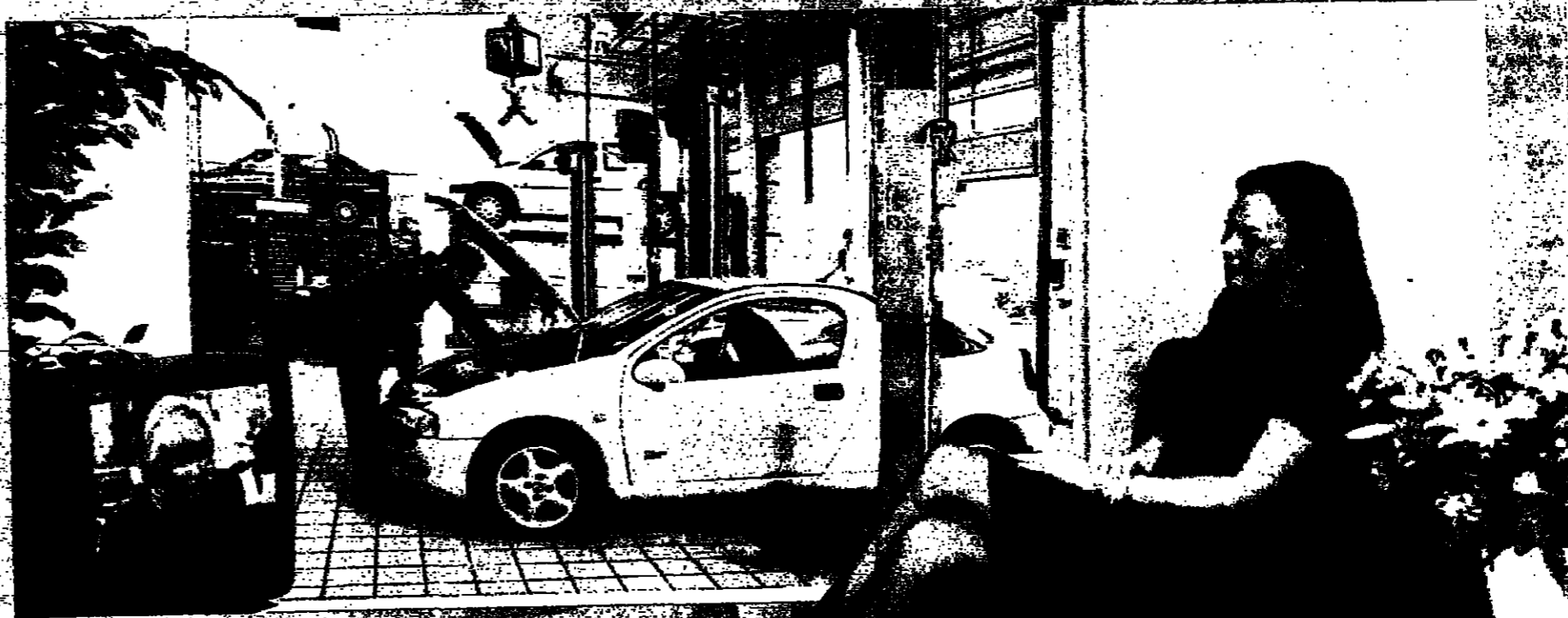
But Anne Williamson, of the Boarding Education Alliance, which commissioned the latest research, said: "Our survey found quite the opposite. The openness and friendliness of staff was what had surprised parents most about boarding."

Those who had been boarders themselves were impressed by the changes. The main doubts were over the quality of food and schools' efforts to stamp out bullying.

The findings will be reported to the Boarding Schools' Association conference, which starts today in Ambleside, Cumbria. Head teachers are seeking a strategy to reverse the 20-year decline in boarding after a census last month showed the smallest drop in numbers in recent years.

Letters, page 21

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Trial for murder of MP starts in France

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS



Piat led campaign against corruption

SEVEN men went on trial near Nice yesterday accused of the murder of Yann Piat, a popular MP.

Piat, 44, was shot dead by two men on a motorcycle on February 25, 1994, as she returned home in her chauffeur-driven car along a country road in southern France.

She was a former member of the National Front who had defected to mainstream conservatism and become a prominent anti-sleaze campaigner, vowing to drive organised crime out of her constituency in the Var, the most corrupt in France.

The Piat murder, the only assassination of a French MP in the Fifth Republic, spawned rumours of mafia involvement and contract killing.

The key suspect on trial yesterday was Gérard Finaie, 53, a bar owner from the

port of Hyères, who is charged with masterminding the assassination of the MP.

The six others in the dock, accused of differing degrees of involvement in the killing, are described as "young dropouts" who were regulars at Le Macama, the bar belonging to M Finaie, who has a previous conviction for racketeering but denies arranging the MP's assassination.

One of the accused, Marco di Caro, 25, has admitted driving the motorcycle from which Piat was killed.

Unabomber to end his days in prison

FROM GILES WHITTILL
IN LOS ANGELES



Kaczynski shortly after he was arrested in 1996

THEODORE Kaczynski, the man identified as the Unabomber and convicted of a string of terrorist attacks, was sentenced yesterday to life in prison without the possibility of parole after being spared the death penalty in a plea bargain.

The sentencing was preceded by emotional scenes in a packed Sacramento courtroom, where Kaczynski read a statement accusing the Government of smearing him by releasing some of his private writings in a memorandum last week.

Prosecutors had claimed Kaczynski's motive in his 18-year bombing campaign was not to better society, as some believe, but simple revenge. The bearded former mathematician called such claims "distorting, false and misleading". He asked the public to reserve judgment on him until he could respond at length, and said that "by discrediting me personally they hope to discredit my political ideas".

As he spoke the family of his last victim, a Californian timber industry lobbyist, pointedly rose from their seats and left the courtroom.

Minutes later Susan Mosser, whose husband was killed by an earlier Kaczynski bomb, listed its contents, including razor blades and nails, and begged the judge to "make this sentence bulletproof... bombproof, if you will. Don't let him murder justice the way he murdered my husband. Lock

him so far down that when he dies he will be closer to hell, where he belongs."

Seven victims of the Unabomber spoke against him in the hour-long hearing, some praising his brother, David, as a hero for turning Kaczynski in to the FBI after reading his manifesto in *The Washington Post* in 1995. Judge Garland Burrell then imposed three consecutive life sentences for Kaczynski's terrorist crimes, committed over 18 years, and an additional 30 years for killing three men and maiming two others with his homemade bombs.

Kaczynski, who is 55, made a farce of his trial in Sacramento earlier this year by firing his lawyers, demanding to represent himself and refusing to be examined by a federal psychiatrist. The psychiatrist's diagnosis was essential if he was to be declared incompetent to stand trial, as his lawyers hoped while they were still on the case.

Minutes before opening statements in the trial were finally due to begin, Kaczynski pleaded guilty in return for a

promise that prosecutors would not seek the death penalty.

The ending to the Unabomber saga is unlikely to satisfy anyone involved. Federal prosecutors and the families of Kaczynski's victims pressed for the death penalty after writings found in his Montana cabin appeared to reveal a cold-blooded killer. David Kaczynski hoped for an acquittal and psychiatric treatment for his brother.

The Unabomber's manifesto, published in major newspapers in return for a promise from its author that the bombings would stop, made him revered by some as a radical environmentalist and anti-technology Luddite.

But the FBI later found a handwritten boast from Kaczynski saying: "I believe in nothing... my motive for doing what I am doing is simply personal revenge."

Kaczynski's family and lawyers claim he is a paranoid schizophrenic who became deeply depressed while working as a mathematics professor at Berkeley in the 1960s.



The Unabomber defendant at court in Montana

Hollywood heroes at war over guns

BY GILES WHITTILL

CHARLTON HESTON, one of Hollywood's original action heroes, has challenged Barbara Streisand to a public showdown over gun control.

Enraged by the "anti-gun" message of a film Ms Streisand has produced for NBC, Mr Heston accused her yesterday of exploiting a serious issue for the sake of ratings and distorting the meaning of the US Constitution. Ms Streisand, a pillar of the West Coast's liberal establishment, has yet to respond to Mr Heston's challenge.

The Long Island Incident, to be broadcast on Thursday, tells the story of Carolyn McCarthy's real-life campaign for Congress after her husband was killed and her son wounded in a 1993 massacre on a Long Island Railroad

commuter train. The film attacks the National Rifle Association (NRA), America's strongest pro-gun lobby.

Mr Heston, a gun enthusiast and vice-president of the NRA, hit back in full-page advertisements in yesterday's *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*. He said the film's attack on the NRA was a strategy of controversy to win ratings and sell advertising, amounting to "profiteering on the back of a tragedy".

Gun lobbyists claim the Second Amendment's call for a "well-armed militia" enshrines the public's right to bear arms in defence of private property and personal freedom. Liberal scholars argue that the amendment was simply a safeguard against foreign invasion.

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Right threatens to oust Netanyahu over land accord

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

JEWISH settlers and members of the National Religious Party (NRP), a key member of Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition, say they will bring down his Government if Israel hands back more than 9 per cent of the West Bank to the Palestinians.

The Tel Aviv daily *Maariv* disclosed the two groups held talks on Saturday to plan their campaign to topple Mr Netanyahu, who has a razor-thin majority of 61-59 in the 120-seat Knesset. The meeting was attended by a number of leading figures in the NRP, which has nine seats.

The campaigners are insisting that no pullback of any sort take place until Israel has laid down parameters for the amount of West Bank land it is prepared to hand back in a final peace agreement. Israel has promised to return 9 per cent of the disputed territory but the United States is press-

ing it to give up 13 per cent. Although the hardliners would risk bringing to power the more dovish opposition Labour Party, their threats to topple Mr Netanyahu were being taken seriously because of the fierce emotions stirred on the far Right by any move to give away land within what it calls Judaea and Samaria and regards as part of its biblical inheritance.

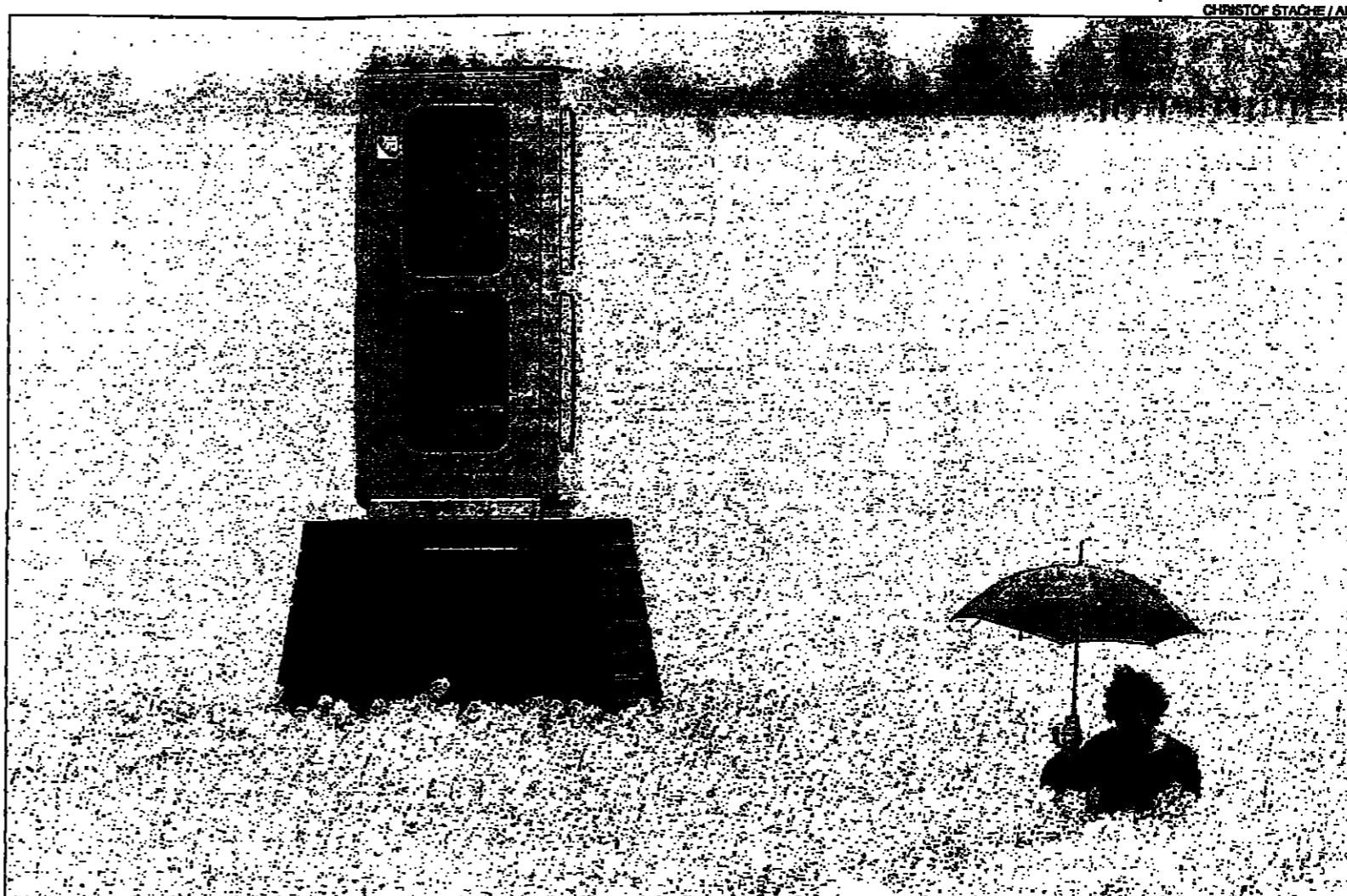
Zvi Hendel, the NRP deputy, said after the planning session between the party and senior members of the council representing 144,000 Jewish settlers: "The purpose of the meeting was to make clear to Netanyahu that our threat is no idle one."

Mr Netanyahu also faces a less immediate threat from the other end of the political spectrum, with a surprise announcement that Roni Milo, the Mayor of Tel Aviv, will run against him for the

premiership in 2000 at the head of a new party dedicated to reducing the power of Jewish religious extremists.

The surprise announcement was prompted by Israel's 50th anniversary concert last week at which religious zealots censored a scantily clad routine by Israel's top modern dance troupe. "The religious censorship, which was applied by an extremist religious segment on the Batsheva performance, was a crisis point in the development of the state of Israel," said Mr Milo, a former rising star of Mr Netanyahu's right-wing Likud, who will quit the party to found his new centrist/secular grouping in November.

Mr Milo, a former Police Minister, said: "My aim is to neutralise the leverage of religious extremists, which is used today by a group which is not large but enjoys great political power."



Crop of call: A German artist, Mona Strehlow, uses a telephone box in a field of rape near Korvin, Lower Saxony, to convey the idea of communication in her project called *Komm (Come) 1998*. A friend walking through the field with an umbrella is part of the composition

Vatican guard bows to humble command

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME



Estermann: break with aristocratic tradition

THE Vatican yesterday announced that it had resolved an embarrassing six-month hiatus in the leadership of the Pope's Swiss Guards by promoting Colonel Alois Estermann, the deputy commander, to head the force.

Officials said the appointment was a "break with tradition" since Colonel Estermann, 44, was not from one of the aristocratic families which have provided the guard with its commanders for centuries.

The Swiss Guard is facing a recruitment crisis because of low pay. It has been without a commander since the resignation last November of Colonel Roland Buchs, who had led the guard for 15 years.

Vatican officials said Colonel Buchs had taken a month's "accumulated leave". But the search for a replacement proved fruitless, with at least ten candidates from Vatican-linked Swiss noble families turning the job down because they had "other career interests".

Colonel Estermann, who has been interim commander since Colonel Buchs's departure, had the "full confidence" of the Pope. As a young man of 27, he was one of the Swiss Guards who rushed to the Pope's side when a gunman attacked him on St Peter's Square in 1981. Colonel Estermann recently said he believed that he would be passed over because he was "of humble origin".

The episode has highlighted the problem of finding new guards, who must be male, Swiss, Roman Catholic, aged between 18 and 25, and at least 5ft 5in tall.

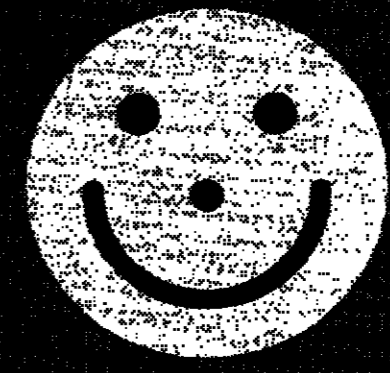
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Bonn-Paris axis in a spin

HELMUT KOHL and President Chirac, their nerves frayed by a European summit that stretched the Franco-German relationship to breaking point, are to meet tomorrow for what promises to be their most icy encounter. The Germans are furious about the compromise over the leadership of the European Central Bank which has exposed all the fundamental political differences with France and the inherent flaws in the euro.

The German election is driving a European marriage of convenience on to the rocks, Roger Boyes writes

fanfare rather than bruising brinkmanship with his chief ally. Second, the French, instead of making it easier for him to win the general election in September, appear to have done all they can to trip him up. "A rotten compromise," yelled *Bild* newspaper.

The body language at the summit was clear: Herr Kohl showed his feelings about the French President by physically distancing himself whenever possible. The German electorate, he was aware, would not welcome pictures of him embracing M Chirac.

A typical comment from a viewer calling a television current affairs programme on

Sunday touched the sore spot: "If Wim Duisenberg thinks he will not be up to serving eight years, why did he not withdraw his candidature? And if Mr Duisenberg, at the age of 63, thinks he is not capable, why should we vote for a Chancellor aged 66?"

Another caller said that the European leaders had re-defined the concept of free will in making Mr Duisenberg sign his retirement pledge. "This is the Don Corleone school of letter-writing, with President Chirac making the offer that cannot be refused."

Inevitably the public outrage caricatured the real evolution of the summit. There

was some criticism yesterday of Tony Blair — for imagining that France and Germany were much closer than was really the case — and the Italians (now clearly identified as allies of the French) but very little self-criticism.

Yet the complicated interplay — between Herr Kohl, Joachim Bitterlich, his Franco-philic foreign policy adviser, Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister (no great fan of Herr Bitterlich) and Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister (not an admirer of Herr Kinkel) — revealed how difficult it is to keep the Paris-Bonn axis going during a German election campaign.

The three coalition partners are determined not to appear weak on the euro before the elections, but they disagree on many other aspects. Herr Waigel, of the conservative Bavarian Christian Social Union, was willing to let the issue run until the last moment: that is until July, to satisfy his Eurosceptic constituents in southern Germany. Herr Kohl, by contrast, wanted a settlement at the weekend to clear the decks before a Christian Democratic party conference on May 17. The strong euro is supposed to be part of his re-election campaign.

The late François Mitterrand could also haunt the Chancellor. A new work on German unification, *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik*, uses newly declassified documents to show how hard the former French President pushed the Chancellor to abandon the mark in return for unification.

Yet Mitterrand is remembered in Bonn with warm sentimentality compared with M Chirac. "Both men obviously wanted to advance French interests through Europe," says a senior German official. "The difference is that Chirac is a vulgarian."



Helmut Kohl after meeting President Herzog to report on the European summit

Clinton demands opening up of EU

President Clinton, in an interview published yesterday, said he strongly supported the euro, but emphasised that European Union countries must now show they were opening their economies. He said he believed that, on the whole, the "tendency toward political and economic unity in Europe is a

positive one". Renato Ruggiero, director general of the World Trade Organisation, hailed the "leadership of the euro" as the "most important step" towards a Europe "once ravaged by war", while Michel Camdessus, head of the International Monetary Fund, said: "I am absolutely convinced the euro will be a sound currency." (AFP)

Satirists go over the top in war on weakened Kohl

By ROGER BOYES

GERMAN satirists have started to bare their teeth against Helmut Kohl and his Government, swapping years of polite, good-natured ribbing for some savage, laudatorial and usually unfunny criticism. The change in tone marks a weakening in the Chancellor's authority.

Until recently, the fiercest attack on Herr Kohl was to compare him to a pear. Satirists were so cowed that he could — without any public protest — take *Penthouse* magazine to court for a cartoon portrayal of his wife, half-clothed and draped over his official limousine. The magazine was forced to withdraw the issue and pay a large sum to charity.

Those days appear to be over. The satirical magazine *Titanic* has begun a series entitled "In the Bonn bunker" which shows Commander Chobik, alias Helmut Kohl, as a uniformed Führer figure ordering staff to keep calm as the Reich collapses around him. "We will fight to the last, you cowards," says the Kohl figure, brandishing a gun.

The magazine *Eulenspiegel* presents Herr Kohl in its latest issue wearing an afro wig. "The euro is not soft enough for me," he says. "Now I want the afro."

Comedienne Gaby Kfister on the RTL television network suggests that the Chancellor "should do something for his image and go into the ring wrapped in nappies like a sumo wrestler". She describes the liberal Free Democratic Party — Herr Kohl's junior



Kohl as a Führer figure "in the Bonn bunker"

coalition partner — as "a kind of urine stain on the underpants of the Government".

Other television comedians have offered laudatorial jokes about Herr Kohl and even wheelchair jokes about Wolfgang Schäuble, his right-hand man who is paralysed from the waist down.

"Never before has such a flood of over-the-top, political-biased and uninhibited criticism been poured on to the head of German government," says television critic Josef Nyary.

Gutter humour about politicians — be they from the Government or the opposition — can only fuel the far-right protest movement, he says, noting a quip from a public network humour programme: "Democracy in modern Germany means that 20 per cent of people go to the polls, 79 per cent stay at home and 1 per cent make the real decisions."



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هكذا من الأصل

Azeris await riches of Caspian oil bonanza

AN AVALANCHE of hard cash is about to descend on the Caucasian republic of Azerbaijan as it begins to emerge from the ravages of the former Soviet Union.

Vast wealth will arrive almost overnight in a remote and little-known region of the world, which lies in the turbulent crossroads between Christianity and Islam, and which could prove to be even more valuable than the Middle East.

Revenues from the new Western-run oilfields are set to spark an economic boom from almost nothing in North Sea levels over the next few years, bringing untold riches to a society black with the former Communist world.

Projections by the Azerbaijan International Operating Company, the multinational oil consortium led by British Petroleum, show an almost vertical line as output rockets from 100,000 to 800,000 barrels a day by 2005. Azeris call it "the wall of money."

Azerbaijan will be the first Caspian state to benefit from the new oil bonanza, with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan trailing close behind. Some geologists predict that the entire Caspian region could hold between 90 and 200 billion barrels of oil.

More conservative estimates dismiss such predictions as hysteria. "But one or even two North Seas is now certain," oil executives say.

Moreover, the Caspian will come on stream as the North Sea goes into decline, effect-

BP is building a 'wall of money' in a region ravaged by past masters, Michael Dynes reports from Baku

ively preventing the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries from regaining a stranglehold on prices.

This is the third oil boom Azerbaijan has experienced in a hundred years. At the turn of the century, Rockefeller, Rothschild and Nobel exploited the country's oil, seeping out of the ground since biblical times. Another boom occurred in the Second World War when the industry ventured offshore.

The current boom is due entirely to Western technology. The oil lies deep beneath

the Caspian and is accessible only by drilling techniques perfected in the North Sea. Western companies have done more in the past four years than the Soviet Union did in 40, one oil executive said.

Moscow tried to prevent Western companies from gaining access to Caspian oil. But by ensuring that Lukoil, Russia's flagship company, was awarded a piece of the action, President Heydar Aliyev helped to ease Russia's paranoia. Some 100,000 bar-

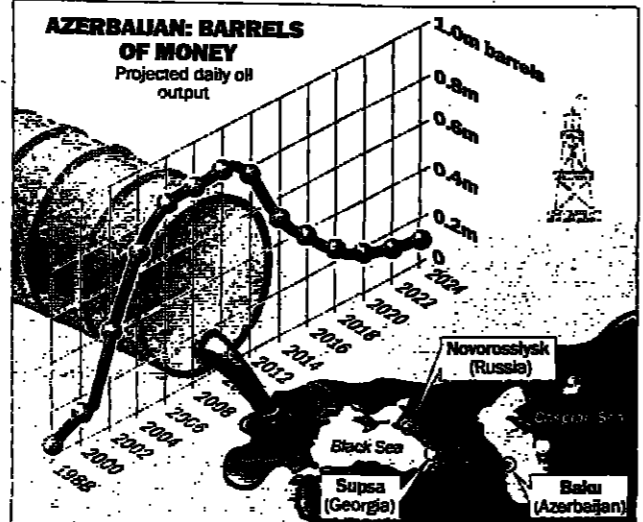
rels a day are currently being exported from Baku to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk. The BP-led consortium is also spending \$1 million (£625,000) a day refurbishing an old pipeline between Baku and Supsa across Georgia.

Within the past few weeks, refurbishment costs have jumped from \$315 million to \$590 million. "The condition of the pipeline is deplorable," one consortium executive said. "We just can't use it. Under pressure tests it leaked like a garden hose, which is not surprising as the locals have been drilling their own holes to draw oil."

Now the Azeris are considering dumping plans to build a \$3 billion Main Export Pipeline from Baku to Ceyhan on the Turkish Black Sea coast, capable of taking one million barrels a day, and upgrading the Baku-Supsa line instead.

But rampant corruption is the biggest threat to Azerbaijan. "Bribery is already a major force in the economy, and the serious money hasn't begun to flow yet," one senior British diplomat said.

When Venezuela and Ecuador became wealthy overnight, it destroyed their economies. Now people are asking whether Azerbaijan will become a Norway or a Nigeria. "The jury is still out," the diplomat said. "But if the rich succeed in creaming off all the wealth, there will be a social explosion here."



Ron Smith, a sacked Sydney docker, celebrates yesterday's High Court ruling

Sydney dockers win jobs appeal

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA'S dockworkers scored a key victory in the bitter waterfront dispute yesterday after the High Court ruled that the 1,400 dockers sacked by Patrick Stevedores a month ago had the right to return to work.

There were scenes of wild jubilation on picket lines across Australia as thousands of workers and supporters cheered the decision and chanted union songs. Jennie George, president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, said: "Today is a great day for the union movement. We've had the rule of law on the side of ordinary working people against the might of corporate power and the might of government. The only one who should feel any job insecurity is the Prime Minister."

The High Court's decision is a major blow for the Government of John Howard, which has backed Patrick Stevedores in its attempt to employ non-union labour and so break the union's monopoly on the waterfront. However, the ruling is not an unequivocal triumph for the unions, as it contains no guarantee that all the sacked workers will get their jobs back.

The court yesterday placed that decision in the hands of administrators who are running the insolvent labour supply companies set up by Patrick.

Titanic firm tries to bar deep-sea tourists

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THE American company which owns the salvage rights to the wreck of the *Titanic* sought a court injunction yesterday to bar a British-based agency specialising in adventure travel from bringing "deep-sea tourists" to the underwater site.

RMS Titanic Inc, based in New York, asked a federal judge in Norfolk, Virginia, to rule that Deep Ocean Expeditions be prohibited from penetrating a ten-mile radius around the sunken liner.

The salvage company's lawyer, Alan Garlin, said: "We're going to do everything we can to protect the wreck." The company claims that it has exclusive rights of visitation, and is entitled to exclude anyone whose presence could damage or film the

wreck, thus diminishing the value and cachet of any artefacts recovered by its own divers.

However, Mike McDowell, the owner of Deep Ocean Expeditions, based in the Isle of Man, is to fight the application for an injunction against his company. He said: "We'll take whatever steps are necessary to challenge it."

Mr McDowell plans to lower up to 60 tourists more than two miles into the depths of the North Atlantic during August to observe the hulk of the *Titanic*. They will pay \$32,500 (£20,000) each.

However, RMS Titanic Inc also hopes to use the August calm to salvage artefacts from the wreck and does not want camera-wielding tourists getting in the way.



Part of the *Titanic*, wrecked in the North Atlantic

Mahogany shipment seized by Brazilians

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZILIAN police have seized 1,600 mahogany logs from a Kayapo Indian reserve in northern Brazil and say that tribal chiefs illegally sold the valuable hardwood to two timber companies which trade with Europe and the United States.

The timber was intercepted as it was being transported on barges down an Amazon Basin tributary inside the Kingo reserve, which is home to 8,000 Kayapo tribespeople.

The timber, worth about \$3 million (£1.8 million), had allegedly been sold by the two chiefs, Fykaty-re and Bekwynhi, to two Brazilian companies, Ouro Verde and Ferreira e Versati. The companies are based in the northern Amazonian state of Para. Ouro Verde belongs to Wagner Luiz Bernardes de Freitas, who has previous convictions for illegal timber exploration.

Environmentalist organisations in Brazil have said that mahogany is still being logged in the Amazon region despite a moratorium on international trading in the wood that was declared by President Cardoso.



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Notice is hereby given to shareholders that following a Resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting of shareholders held on 30th April, 1998, a Dividend for the year 1997 of DM 1.90 per share of DM 5 nominal will be paid as from 4th May, 1998 against delivery of Coupon No. 57.

All dividends will be subject to deduction of German Capital Yields Tax of 24.375% (25% plus 5.5% "Solidarity Surcharge" on the Capital Yields Tax).

The net amount of dividend is payable in German Marks. Paying Agents outside Germany will pay in the currency of the country in which the Coupon is presented at the rate of exchange on the day of presentation.

Coupon No. 57 may be presented as from 4th May, 1998 at the Company's Paying Agent in the United Kingdom: SBC Warburg Dillon Read, 1 Finsbury Avenue, London EC2M 2PP from whom claim forms may be obtained.

United Kingdom Income Tax will be deducted at the rate of 5% (5 pence in the £1) unless claims are accompanied by an affidavit.

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Leverkusen, April 30, 1998

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Clinton aide to tackle terror

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE United States is to appoint an anti-terrorism czar as part of a new national strategy against domestic and foreign terrorist attacks.

More than three years after the Oklahoma City bombing, and amid increasing concerns about the lack of an integrated policy, President Clinton has asked Richard Clarke, his special assistant on national security affairs, to lead a \$7 billion (£4.2 billion) counter-terrorism effort next year.

The initiative has come less than a month after a report gave a warning that the US Government was incapable of sharing terrorist information between its many departments. There were fears that the nation's infrastructure could easily become a target for attacks on computer systems.

Bush Jnr courts voters with a moral crusade

Texans are rallying to ex-President's son
Bronwen Maddox reports from Blanco

can field devoid of ideological breadth and popular appeal, he has both — enough to make him the likely front-runner for the party nomination in 2000.

The feature which makes him a new voice in Republican politics is a passion for local control combined with internationalist instincts, perhaps partly derived from his Harvard business de-

is the best justification for the death penalty, he says. In March he signed the death warrant for Karla Faye Tucker, the first woman to be executed in Texas since 1863. He offers teenagers a list of rules for clean living. In his twenties, he has said, "I enjoyed myself. I enjoyed a good libation," but has since given up drink. "Stay off drugs and alco-

his father, more Texan. He has a combative familiarity — "I wish you brought your wife, she's much nicer than you" — which goes down well in his home state.

Those are qualities which make handicappers excited about his chances in 2000. But there are also questions about his national appeal. If Americans feel so prosperous that they will overlook Mr Clinton's impulses, they may be in no mood for a moral lecture.

Mr Bush's charm also gives way easily to prickliness when criticised, with retorts such as, "I'm not going to fall into that trap, I'm too intelligent for that."

His decision about whether to run in 2000 will depend above all, he says, on whether he can face putting his family under the blowtorch of national scrutiny. The past year has produced two startling political phenomena: Americans' willingness to forgive Mr Clinton his personal failings and the lack of leadership among national Republican politicians. If Mr Bush runs in 2000, the response will reveal whether a national appetite for moralising has reappeared, and whether his party has retained an instinct for self-preservation.

"I am not going to fall into that trap, I'm too intelligent for that"

GESTURING emphatically with a barbecued spare rib, perched at the tables of an outdoor restaurant, George W. Bush dodges questions about whether he will follow his father and run for the presidency. "I haven't made up my mind yet," he says. "I do know I want to be re-elected Governor of Texas in November."

To that end he spent nine hours on Friday touring the heart of Texas, a landscape of humpy hills, lush scrub and pink granite outcrops, home to ranchers, hunters and retired couples from the capital, Austin. The timeless town squares, lined with deer taxidermists and faded movie theatres, are a world away from national politics: the 200-strong crowds pepper him with questions about water shortages and court cases.

But there is also the kind of buzz that surrounds a suddenly promising racehorse. "Take my picture with the next president," insists one elderly man. Laughing and protesting "Don't say that", Mr Bush obliges. He does not need to declare his intentions until early next year, months after the November elections, which he is expected to win. But it is clearly tempting. In a Republi-

gree and career in the energy business. He supported the bailout of the Mexican peso and says that the controversial North American Free Trade Agreement has worked: Texan exports to Mexico were worth \$31 billion (£19 billion) last year.

He also steers a pragmatic course through inflammatory issues. He is against abortion but adds: "I'm a realist." Deterrence

hol," he now instructs, adding "it is an honour ... to abstain from sex until you find the partner you're going to marry".

His views may not entirely satisfy the extremes in his own party, but they have pulled in many Democrats, much as Mr Clinton has spanned the party divide nationally. Like Mr Clinton, Mr Bush, 51, can also charm a crowd. He is less patrician than



Bush addresses a crowd in Burnet, Texas, on the importance of literacy

WORLD IN BRIEF

Girls 'tried to derail train for robbery'

Minsk: Prosecutors in Belarus have opened a criminal case against three girls, aged 13 and 14, who allegedly tried to derail a train in the hope of looting passengers' luggage. Yuri Vorobyov, chief of the transport police in the town of Molodechno, 40 miles northwest of Minsk, capital of the former Soviet republic, said that in April police found the girls trying to attach metal plates to tracks in the area. The girls told police they wanted to rob passengers of their wallets and suitcases after the train crashed.

The girls had previously tried to derail trains using grease on the rails, rocks and a chain, the Pass news agency reported. It said the mother of one of the girls had suggested that placing metal plates on the tracks would be a more effective way of causing a crash. The trio told police that they did not think people could be killed in a crash. (AP)

72 drown after bus crash

Dar es Salaam: Seventy-two passengers were drowned when flash floods swept a bus off a bridge in northeastern Tanzania, national radio reported yesterday. Twenty-one men and five women survived by swimming and climbing trees. Frederick Sumaye, the Prime Minister, travelled to Tanga, 240 miles north of Dar es Salaam, to comfort relations. In another bus accident, 33 people were burnt to death and a further 17 injured after a bus collided with a lorry carrying smuggled petrol near Maracaibo, the capital of the oil-producing state of Zulia on the coast of western Venezuela. (AP, AFP)

Britons nominated for Tonys



British hopes: Richardson, McEwan and Mendes

New York: The British actresses Natasha Richardson and Geraldine McEwan, as well as the Londoner Sally Bowles, are nominated for Tony awards, Broadway's equivalent of the Oscars (Tunku Varadarajan writes). Miss Richardson was nominated for best actress in a musical for her portrayal of Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*. Mendes, its director, was nominated for best director (musicals), and McEwan was nominated for best actress in a play for her role in Ionesco's *The Chairs*.

Blame for Cyprus deadlock

Nicosia: America's senior diplomatic troubleshooter, Richard Holbrooke, blamed the Turkish Cypriot administration for his failure to break the deadlock in the long-running Cyprus problem (Michael Theodorou writes). But he was equally critical of the European Union. Its exclusion of Turkey from the enlargement process led to the present impasse by hardening attitudes on the Turkish side which was now making unrealistic demands, he said.

Diana commercial apology

Seoul: The South Korean carmaker Kia Motors is to apologise to Britain for a television commercial which was to have suggested that Diana, Princess of Wales would have survived her fatal crash had she been a passenger in one of its vehicles (Jennifer Veale writes). Kia Motors Sales Company, the carmaker's sales arm, said its president would write an apology to Stephen Brown, Britain's Ambassador in Seoul, and to other government authorities. The advertisement idea has been dropped.

Cancer kills Croat minister

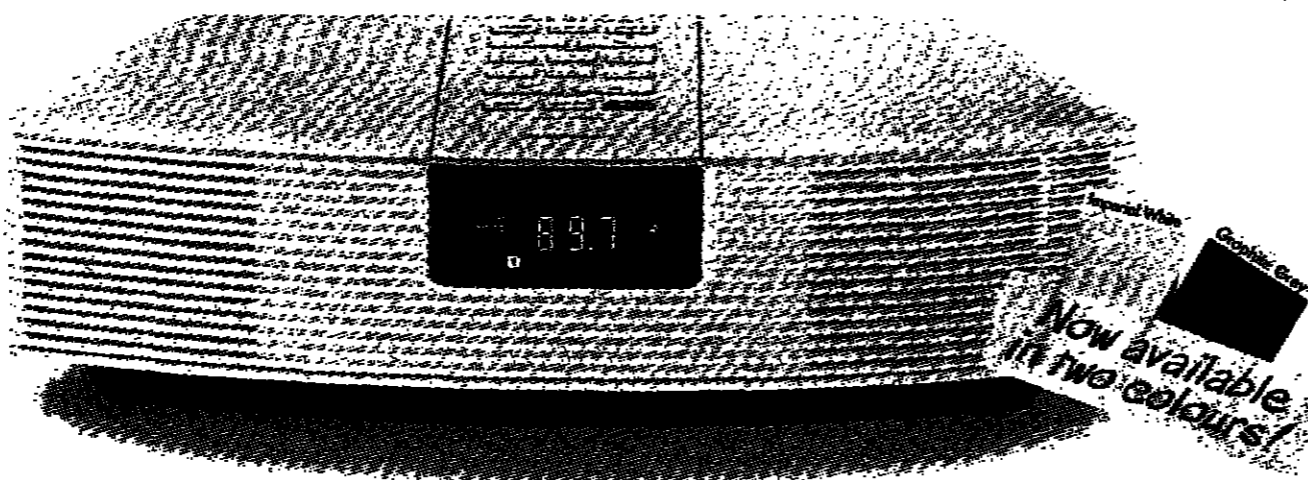
Belgrade: Gojko Susak, right, the hardline Croat Defence Minister whose often violent nationalism helped to make him one of the most influential forces in the break-up of Yugoslavia, has died in Zagreb from lung cancer, aged 53 (Tom Walker writes). The Government of Franjo Tudjman, Croatia's post-independence President, whose career has relied on Mr Susak's powerful connections with the diaspora, has declared a national day of mourning.



Buzzed flight grounded

Tokyo: A Japan Airlines flight had to be cancelled after cabin staff failed to expel an unwelcome guest — a huge bee that boarded before passengers. JAL's ground attendants saw the insect flying into the plane's cabin just before they completed departure preparations. No one was hurt and the bee eluded attendants for an hour until it was sprayed with insecticide. Passengers were instructed to walk to the next plane.

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'Writing is my work, but not my job'

Toni Morrison's new book is expected to sell a million. Jason Cowley meets the pride of America

Serene, regal and comfortably aloof on a steady stream of achievement, Toni Morrison is unmistakable as she wanders through the leafy enclosures of Princeton University. She moves slowly, and though short of breath, and her silvery braids have the pallor and intricacy of a wasp's nest. Students point at her, whispering as she passes. It is not just her blackness in this citadel of white privilege that is so striking; it is more that this granddaughter of an Alabama slave radiates an essential vitality, a difference.

There is no one quite like her in the US, no one rivaling her status as, to echo *The New York Times*, the "nearest thing America has to a national novelist", no one who has done more to destabilise the literary hierarchies, while giving voice to the historically dispossessed. She is, in every sense, the new empress of the blues. Today Morrison is accompanying Seamus Heaney, a fellow Nobel laureate, to a poetry reading; tomorrow Gabriel Garcia Marquez — invited by Morrison in her role as a teacher at Princeton — arrives on the campus for a week of seminars.

At times, Princeton seems like a club for famous writers — the Japanese novelist Kenzaburo Oe, a fourth laureate, is also on campus. But none is as famous as Morrison. Since the publication, in 1970, of *The Bluest Eye*, her first novel, she has, again and again, compelled Americans to confront that part of their history they would rather forget: slavery. In doing so, she invented her own idiom, found a new way of writing about her own culture in a style she proudly calls "indisputably black".

Her prose is loose, colloquial, a lexical fusion of standard English and the vernacular, of lyric and street language, of the formal and folkloric. Critics speak of her singing voice, of the music of her dialogue. *Paradise* (Chatto & Windus, £15.99), her seventh and most recent novel, is a study of a small all-black township, Ruby, founded by former slaves. It rams restlessly

across the decades and its central event concerns the massacre of a group of women at a former convent on the fringes of the town.

American booksellers have ordered more than one million copies. This is an astounding figure, the result partly of Morrison's iconic status and partly of an enthusiastic recommendation from Oprah Winfrey. When I met Morrison at her New York apartment, she spoke animatedly of her hour-long appearance on *Oprah*. "Oprah uses her show to promote books to the kind of people who might be intimidated by bookshops, the people I want to reach and am keen to address."

Can you name a great writer who was a mother?

Morrison's large, open-plan apartment is on the top floor of a converted police station, a landmark turn-of-the-century building in downtown Manhattan. It is simply furnished: just a couple of bookshelves, a television, sofa and chairs. She has another house across town on the Hudson River and an apartment in Princeton.

In conversation, she is engaging and attentive, laughing often. She is open about most things apart from what she refers to, curiously, as her companion life. "You can't be serious asking me that," she says, responding to a question about whether she has a partner. "It's none of your business. My sexual, my companion life, whether I walk around barefoot in my house — that's mine, all mine. I fight tooth and nail to protect that." She seems to relax only once the tape recorder is turned off, after which we talk for hours. She began writing in the mid-1960s to "forestall melancholy" after the disintegration of her marriage to Harold Morrison, a Jamaican architect with whom she had two

sons. At first, she wrote tentatively, in stolen moments. "I was very startled by this compulsion to write. I didn't know where it came from. My life in publishing [she was an editor at Random House] was very fulfilling, I didn't need to add anything to it. Only when I completed *The Bluest Eye* did I realise that I needed to have this thing going. But I still didn't think it would have a central role in my life, because I was completely focused on my children and job."

She pauses, then offers this thought. "Can you name a great woman writer who was a mother? We begin baring names back and forth across an invisible net. Virginia Woolf, the Brontës, Emily Dickinson, Edith Wharton, George Eliot, Austen: all childless. She has a point. "But you see, I had children and a job. It was difficult. It's always been different for men: they might have wives and families but they've been able to focus the central part of their lives on their work. Until recently, women couldn't do that."

The Bluest Eye was published into a vacuum; there was very little, if anything, to compare with it in contemporary fiction. If Morrison had a literary precursor, critics couldn't name her. "My book appeared out of nowhere and went nowhere," she says. Yet this account of the struggles of a young black girl who is abused by her father and who longs to have blue eyes has a fierce originality. It prefigures many of the concerns of her entire oeuvre: the burden of guilty memory, the corruption of American innocence, fractured identity (her characters fight to discover the truth of their African heritage), the unreliability of historical narrative.

Talking to Morrison, you realise how much she was hurt by the response to her first book. "What was so frustrating was that it was embraced as being representative of African-American life. No one reads *Lolita* as if it were typical of white girls. My book was about incest; it wasn't a children's book. Yet it was taught to children as offering a good look into the black family. I was horrified. "The criteria for black writers were so different. We were seen as exotic or as revealing fundamental sociological truths about our community. But I wanted to write about race without being told that I was producing case studies. That took away the whole world for me."



Toni Morrison: "My father taught me that unemployment was a bad thing. Give me a stipend, a little office and a little bit of health insurance — I'll be fine"

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P&O STENA LINE, SEAFRANCE & HOVER SPEED

Not tonight darling, I have a very potent headache

In the best traditions of British medicine Dr Richard Petty, the medical director of London's Wellman Clinic, tried out Viagra, the new diamond-shaped small blue pill designed to treat impotency, before prescribing it for his patients. Dr Petty paid a heavy penalty for his public-spirited act: he developed a headache, his eyes bulged, his face reddened and his neck swelled. What happened to the rest of his anatomy is not recorded. Viagra is still not generally available in the United Kingdom, but has been released in the United States. It restores potency for a few hours to 80 per cent of impotent men. The likelihood of success doesn't seem to be dependent on the cause of impotency and it has been effective in improving the condition in those who have had colonic or prostatic surgery, as well as those who have suffered from vascular disease or have psychological tensions.

MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

Unlike Caverject or Erecnos, which are injected directly into the penis, or Muse, which is a tiny pellet inserted into the urethra, the erection after taking Viagra is dependent on the male having the necessary stimulation, both cyclical and physical. Viagra is taken about an hour before its efficacy is likely to be tested. Thereafter, once there is the appropriate stimulation, the blood flows into the corpora cavernosa and spongiosum and the penile tissue becomes engorged, even if it has been parched of an adequate blood supply for months or years. Equally importantly, drainage from the corpora is restricted so that the erection is maintained. Dr Petty isn't alone in

experiencing a headache after taking Viagra. It is the most common side-effect, felt by about 10 to 15 per cent of all those who have sampled the pills. The Petty-style headache will result in the rules of bedroom diplomacy being rewritten. Traditionally it has been the woman who has used the excuse of a headache to avoid sex. It has the advantage of being irrefutable and provides a kindly rejection. Now, it may be the man who uses a headache as an excuse, but in his case the reluctance will be to avoid one in the future, rather than making the existing pain worse. There is hope for the elderly. Those over 65 rarely have headaches and sleeplessness and they are also spared the 36 per cent of headaches caused by coping with a young family, or the 46 per cent brought on by tensions in the office. Overall, a hectic lifestyle was considered a factor by 49 per cent of those who have tension headaches.

usually of moderate severity and are often described as "like a tight band around the head", or may be felt as an overall diffuse pain frequently starting at the back of the neck. Women are 10 per cent more likely to suffer from tension headaches than men, but whatever their gender, lack of sleep is the most common triggering factor, responsible for 64 per cent of all tension headaches. In young people nightclubbing as a cause of loss of sleep was frequently quoted, whereas those who are older were more likely to be sleepless as the result of playing computer games or surfing the Internet. Tension headaches can be relieved by a wide variety of analgesics which can be bought over the counter at the local pharmacy. A recent, composite remedy is Synadol which is composed of two different analgesics, paracetamol and codeine, and an antihistamine, doxylamine succinate, a potent muscle relaxant which eases the myriad of small muscles in the neck and scalp.

The bathroom medicine chest looks as if it is going to be reinforced in the future with Synadol to cure the tension headaches, and Viagra, which may ease sexual tensions - but cause headaches for quite other reasons. Tension headaches are the recurrent pain suffered by those who are stressed. They are thought to stem from tensions in the muscles of the scalp and neck. They are



Privacy is paramount to Raine Spencer. She believes that too many so-called friends have "come out of the woodwork" since Diana's death

First lady of Claridge's

Raine Countess Spencer has been going to Claridge's since she was six years old. Interview by Philippa Kennedy

The phrase "making an entrance" was pitifully inadequate to describe the arrival of Raine Countess Spencer at Claridge's. Liveried doormen snapped to attention as she sailed majestically through the revolving doors, trailing porters in her wake and greeting staff by their first names. It was as if the lady of the house had arrived home for afternoon tea as Milady herself swept upstairs, punctual to the second. "I've been coming here since I was six years old," she explains, which is why BBC2 asked her to present tonight's programme about the hotel's 100th anniversary. "The first time I came here was for a children's party given for a girl called Anne Dubonnet of the drinks family. They had these incredible little stalls laden with wonderful toys and goodies. We were given chocolate money to buy them," she says, ready to reminisce breathlessly about the days when the young Raine McCorquodale broke countless hearts at lavish coming-out balls held at the London hotel. It takes a few minutes to recover from the onslaught of Raine Spencer's personality, by which time she has seized control of the situation, on this occasion our photo-shoot in one of Claridge's royal suites. Her husband was a photographer, she informs us. When she talks about "my husband" she means the late Lord Spencer. The Earl of Dartmouth, who died just before Christmas and to whom she was married for 28 years, first as Mrs Gerald Legge and then as Viscountess Lewisham, is referred to as her "first husband", and the French aristocrat Jean-François, the Count de Chambrun, her "third" - they were divorced quietly last year after a marriage which on paper lasted three years but which was over in months. Lady Spencer's trademark bouffant had just been teased into submission by David at David and Joseph in Berkeley Street, so it was imperative we take the pictures first while she was "fresh", which to her means immaculate make-up, perfectly manicured fingernails and not a hair out of place. "I have quite thick hair and I have it done three times a week. I can wash it, dry it and comb it out myself but I don't particularly want to. I like not a hair

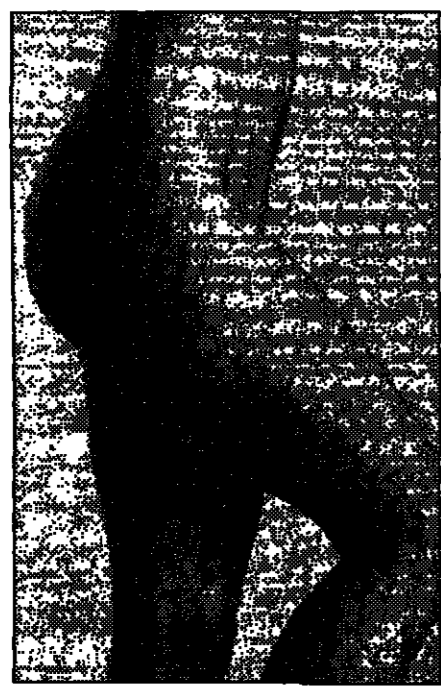
of place," she says firmly. Raine Spencer uses her regal appearance and often imperious mannerisms as a shield against a society which has not always been kind to her. "I don't dye my hair. I won't have a facelift and I never lie about my age and if people don't like it they can just push off," she says. Her *grande dame* style makes her an easy target and during her years at Althorp, the antagonism of the Spencer offspring to their stepmother, whom they nicknamed Acid Raine, was often deliberately unkind. It sometimes pierced the armour, but then, as now, Raine did her crying in private. She refuses to discuss her stormy relationship with her stepchildren, which ended with the earl's death in 1992. The bundling of her possessions out of Althorp within days of her husband's death has been well documented. Raine prefers to draw a line under it all, although her reconciliation with Diana, Princess of Wales, is a matter of pride. In the BBC documentary, she makes a point of the fact that they lunched together frequently in a discreet corner of the dining room at Claridge's. "The tables are far apart so it's difficult to be overheard. The other great thing was that nobody would stare at Diana. When you are in a place with lots of celebrities it makes life much easier, because they all think they are terribly important too." Apart from feeling that talking about friends and one's own private life is "vulgar", Raine thinks that far too many so-called friends have "come out of the woodwork" since Diana's death. "Some of it I know to be rubbish. After John died we were very close although I would never reveal any of our conversations. It's the same with the Spencer family. I was married to John for 16 years and I know too much

about the family which I would never speak about," she says. It is clear that her relationship with the current Earl Spencer and his sisters, Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes, has not improved and they are not happy that their former stepmother has decided to revert to the Spencer name. Raine is unrepentant. "So many of my friends begged me to do it. They always think of me as Spencer. I couldn't possibly go back to McCorquodale. It's such a mouthful and there is a Lady Dartmouth so I couldn't call myself that." Of all the names she has been known by, Lewisham was her favourite "because it's on the buses", but Spencer is the one she feels identifies her now. When she married "Johnnie" Spencer in 1976, some called it ambitious social mountaineering, but her devotion to the earl was unquestionable and she is credited for nursing him back to life after a stroke two years later. It gave him 14 further years, for which Diana thanked Raine after his death. As she speaks of the weeks and months when she talked her husband back to life, Raine's composure wavers. "Yes, I really think I did. He was worthwhile saving," she says softly. "We had an enormous need for each other. I couldn't imagine life without Johnnie." She admits that she was lonely when the earl died. "It's a great shock at first being on your own. I married when I was 18 and when John died I was terribly lonely."

the theatre and going out to lunch and dinner but I am just as happy going to Harrods' warehouse in Osterley to price goods at 9pm." She is fiercely loyal to Mohamed Al Fayed, an old friend of her husband, who made her a director of Harrods International, hence the trips to warehouses. "I'm sure he gave me the job out of kindness. Retailing was a new world although buying and selling is exactly the same as it was in our shop at Althorp," she says. "I love selling things" she adds without irony - the disappearance of salerooms of millions of pounds' worth of family heirlooms to pay off debts and keep the estate going was a major bone of contention between her and the Spencer children. Her early relationship with her own mother, Barbara Cartland, the romantic novelist, partly explains her ability to maintain her smile even through the most painful episodes in her life. "I remember going to her and telling her about someone who had hurt my feelings. She told me to pull myself together, that we did not have hurt feelings and certainly not in public."

She deplores what some commentators call the "emotional incontinence" of the nation, although she is careful not to link her comments to the public grief over the death of Diana. "Typically, British inhibitions have relaxed and I don't like it. Strong feelings are best kept private." Her determinedly girlish gaiety is another throwback to a dominant mother who instilled in her the notion that men didn't like "clever gels". "I was always immersed in a book as a girl and would come home with lots of prizes only to be told by my mother, 'I couldn't care less, you have gravity on your clothes and your hair is a mess.'" If her childhood memories have a poignant, Raine would be aghast if she thought anyone felt sorry for her. Her perfect English rose skin is remarkably tough, as becomes evident when she launches fearlessly, if unwisely, at the Ivor Novello classic *We'll Gather Lilies*, in tonight's documentary. Raine Spencer may have her faults, but lack of courage is not one of them. © One Foot in the Past, BBC2, 8pm

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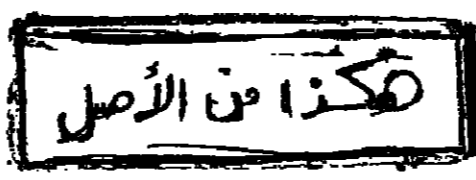
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Why

Gina Sereny

THE TIMES TUESDAY MAY 5 1998

space traveller

is willing to sit comfortably

CRIES UNHEARD: MARY BELL

Why we must hear our children

Gitta Sereny wrote the story of Mary Bell in the hope that lessons could be learnt. At the end of a week of controversy, this final extract calls for fundamental changes in the way we deal with child criminals

I believe Mary Bell's childhood experiences to be the key to the tragedy that happened in Scotland in 1968. I believe, too, that, if properly investigated, comparable traumas will be found in the background to most similar cases. I further believe that children below 12 years of age do not necessarily have the same understanding as adults of good and bad, of truth or untruths and, certainly, of death.



Bell: a child brushed aside

I think the main responsibility for the behaviour and the actions of young children lies with their parents, carers and, to a degree, teachers. This is not meant to provide an excuse, or an out, for children who commit violent crimes: even if they really don't know the degree of the wrong they have done, they always know that they have done wrong. And so, while they need to be helped at once to understand this "degree", they also need to be punished quite quickly, for cause and effect is the way of the world and they have to learn it. As is so often forgotten, we are speaking of children, not of miniature adults.

I believe that in a civilised society children under 14 cannot be held criminally responsible, and should not be tried in an adult court, or by a jury.

My purpose in undertaking this book was to show how such a terrible story comes about, with all the many flaws it uncovers. The fact that relatives, closing ranks against outsiders, protect their own, unmindful or unaware of the consequences: that neighbours close their ears to serious troubles next door; that over-extended police officers

in 1997, when she voluntarily confessed to the atrocious murder, when she was 12, of 19-year-old Katie Rackliff, and then the two ten-year-olds, whose names need not again be mentioned, who killed James Bulger. There was also the appalling recent case of an 11-year-old and three ten-year-old boys accused of raping a nine-year-old girl in their school lavatory, and who were tried (and acquitted) at the Old Bailey — a shaming experience whichever way one looks at it for all who attended.

There is, of course, a difference between the meteoric rise in Britain, America and the

Mary had to protect her mother's awful secrets

rest of Europe of serious juvenile crimes, such as rape and robbery with force, and the still comparatively rare instances of young children committing murder. There is also a difference between young children who kill and may not know what they are doing, and murders committed by older teenagers who manifestly do. There is another important difference between the not infrequent act of children killing a sibling, a parent or familiar adult because of anger, jealousy or fear, and those rarest and most baffling cases of a child of any age killing a stranger, worst of all a younger child.

These cases, as I have said, are rare, and, as Mary's story so graphically shows, are almost certainly in every instance the result of a long build-up of pressure that finally brings the child to a breaking point. But their increased frequency may not be unconnected to developments in society.

Far too few parents now accept the necessity for children to grow up slowly, nor do they realise their own pivotal importance to the development, which only they can nurture, of the child's self-image. It is, I think, the interference with the creation or destruction of this self-image in the early years of childhood, that plants the seeds of serious troubles.

But there is more to ponder: the ruthless competitiveness of our time drives most of us adults to discipline ourselves,

but we do not discipline our children. We are afraid of them. Their apparent self-assurance (often just a cover for their needs) baffles us. To compensate for the resultant gap in understanding, we surround them with material advantages, but we cannot give them, and do not have the energy to offer them, much more of ourselves than our occasional half-conscious presence in an armchair in front of the television.

It is appalling to think other countries are tempted to adopt the three worst aspects of British justice, which has otherwise been an example to the world: criminal responsibility in England as of the age of ten (in Scotland as of eight); children who commit serious crimes tried in adult courts; and juveniles, as of 16, sent to prison. What are we to do?

In the administration of justice for children, it is in Britain that children have fared worst. But Britain is still deemed a moral force, in America and much of Europe. So it should be Britain that leads the way in what one might call a new children's charter. It should begin with the long-delayed appointment of a Minister for Children and the re-establishment, in every local authority, of departments devoted solely to children.

But this is not enough: funds need to be made available, and facilities set up, for intensive training or retraining in child psychology and the pathology of parent-child relationships, both for social workers wishing to specialise in children and for teachers in infant and junior schools. The Government, through this newly appointed Minister for Children, needs to encourage and support increased discipline in schools and find new ways of dealing with truancy.

Individual responsibility needs to be imposed on adults and nurtured in the young. The main way towards this is to give the individual child or young person a say in his or her life; an awareness that we will treat them as individuals rather than as humans in the flesh of teachers and social workers. Instead of presuming that the child or young person who behaves conspicuously wants to be bad, we need first to confront them with the question "Why?" and work with them until it is answered. As we can see in Mary Bell's story, none of this happened then or is indeed happening now: none of these questions is asked; the parents are automatically believed, and the child brushed aside.

The two cases I have mainly quoted here, Mary Bell and the two boys who killed James Bulger, have caused many people in the legal, medical and penal communities to rethink the way our system deals with children who kill or commit serious crimes. In 1996 a working party of six experts, members of the legal reform group Justice, produced a report, *Children and Homicide*, on procedures for juveniles in murder and manslaughter cases, which included among its recommendations that the age of criminal responsibility be re-examined with a view to raising it in line with other European countries (possibly to 14); that children under the age of 14 should not be liable to public trial in adult courts; that their cases should be heard before a specially convened panel of a judge and two magistrates with relevant



Gitta Sereny: "Even if children don't know the degree of the wrong they have done, they always know they have done wrong"

experience and training, without a jury; that the mandatory sentence of detention during Her Majesty's pleasure for 10 to 18-year-olds convicted of murder should be abolished; that children found guilty of homicide should be detained in a secure unit or young offender institution and that they should not then be automatically moved to an adult prison.

These recommendations echo my views. However, I have additional proposals. I propose the setting up, in conjunction with the existing youth courts, of a new kind of Children's Criminal Court. For the bench of this court the Lord Chancellor would appoint a senior judge and two to five magistrates with special knowledge and training.

I suggest that the function of this Children's Criminal Court should be to ascertain not only whether the child committed the act but, if so, why. It is fundamental to this understanding that the court should be fully informed of young defendants' childhood experiences and their entire family dynamics before a trial begins.

As soon as a child is arrested and charged, the magistrates of this new court would immediately order a thorough investigation by the social services into the child's background (as is normal proce-

dures in some European countries) and would recommend the child to be placed for the period of remand in a psychiatrically orientated remand home where he or she could be observed and the reports submitted to the court. At present anything except the most cursory psychiatric examination of an accused child is considered to carry a risk of adulterating the evidence.

There is also a fear that young defendants, talking to a psychiatrist for any purpose other than to help him to form his opinion as to their ability to tell right from wrong, might lose their right to silence, and as psychiatrists and therapists are not protected by confidentiality as lawyers are and might be called as witnesses by the prosecution, this could lead children to incriminate themselves before being tried in court.

Although I am aware of these risks, my experience with Mary and other children has convinced me that putting such children into a quasi-punitive facility during many months of remand is prejudicial, and that to avoid the ignorance of the court, it is essential for them to have comprehensive social and psychiatric reports at their disposal before trial.

The Children's Criminal Court I propose should retain

a considerable element of formality. I am making a special point of this because I think it is important for children that the appearance of the court underline the gravity of the occasion. There need be no wigs or red robes. The judge could be distinguished by wearing a black robe and the lawyers dark suits.

At the time of the trial, the usual British judicial form would be followed, with a prosecutor to present the case and the accused child defended by a barrister. But the procedure would be different in two main respects: first, the accused child would have the support of a new officer of the court, a Children's Advocate who, particularly interested in this aspect of working both with the courts and with children, would be recruited from either the social or legal services and trained in child psychology and legal procedure. Providing the child with what one might call a friend at court, he or she would be in contact with the child throughout the trial, supply them with explanations and give support when necessary. That person could be called upon to speak on the child's behalf.

Secondly, children would not be cross-examined and, making the process easier and more comprehensible to them, would be addressed and questioned only by the judge. The adversarial system would be maintained by the prosecutor and the defence counsel arguing the case between each other and with the judge.

ation and, when necessary, treatment for the children. What is also an essential part of any treatment children receive, however, is that their parents are worked with simultaneously.

Denying the importance of childhood experiences to the management of severely disturbed children (as was officially stated prior to Mary Bell's arrival at Red Bank) is not only unintelligent but also represents an ideological rather than a protective or compassionate attitude. And to leave children who have gone through the trauma of committing serious and often horrific crimes without the opportunity to take issue with what they have done, seems to me synonymous with "cruel and unusual punishment".

It might seem that in all of this discussion I have forgotten the families of the victims of these crimes. It is not so. They have been always on my mind. I know their wish must have been never to have to relive those dreadful days, never to hear the name of Mary Bell again. But I have wondered whether somehow, super-humanly, these families who were so appallingly robbed of their children could come to understand my purpose and find some crumb of solace in that understanding. I think most of us now accept that Mary Bell was not a "murderer" but a severely damaged child whom no one helped: no evil was felt, no evil intended, only a child's ultimate despair led to this tragedy.

Mary knows her guilt is permanent: nothing can remove it, nothing can allay her sadness for what she has done. But her dream — a modest one, I feel — is to work, to study, to live in peace with her family; to be allowed, as she puts it, "to be normal". She allows herself no mitigation, and in her despair for an answer has repeatedly said: "There are many unhappy, very disturbed kids out there who don't end up robbing families of their children."

This is true. It is true, too, however, that we still do not understand the determining stimulus for the "breaking point" in children who kill or commit serious crimes, and which for Mary came one day before her 11th birthday. What we do know now, what Mary's agonising recollections have shown us, is that once that breaking point is reached, the child has no way of suppressing it.

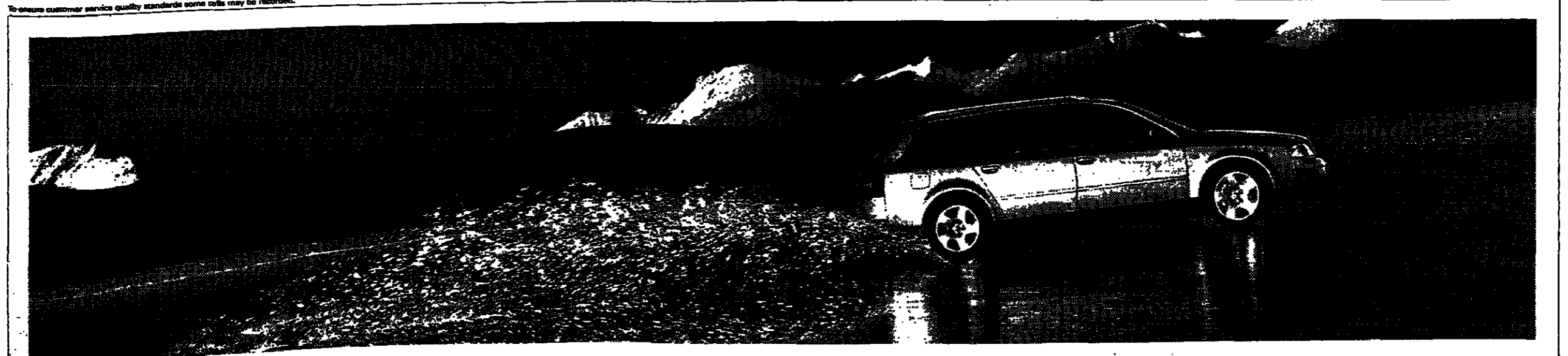
There are many people in our society who dismiss children such as Mary as "evil" and thus both condemn them and absolve themselves of any responsibility for their fate. But if Mary's story is to serve any purpose, it must help us to change that attitude; must help us to change the future — for the sake of all our children.

This is an edited extract from the conclusion of *Cries Unheard* by Gitta Sereny, published by Macmillan. Times readers can buy a copy for £18 instead of the RRP of £20 by calling The Times Bookshop on 0900 134459.

Leading article, page 21

I have not forgotten the victims' families

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Ros Drinkwater reports on advances in optometry in a deregulated market, and the vital role of optical testing

Widening the field of vision

Ophthalmology, the medical science concerned with diseases and disorders of the eye, has advanced more in the past 50 years than in the preceding six centuries.

As early as 1268, magnifying lenses of transparent quartz or beryl inserted in frames were used for reading both in China and in Europe. The earliest ophthalmologists were itinerant medieval oculists.

Today the UK optical sector is a multimillion-pound industry. Surgical techniques can deal with eye problems that were untreatable a decade ago, and sophisticated equipment is used to detect eye disease. Many optometrists can produce photographs of the retina, which can be used to track changes over time.

In the past decade, instruments which measure pressure inside the eye and examine the field of vision have become much more high-tech, meaning that tests can be carried out by clinical assistants rather than practitioners themselves. This allows more patients to be seen — and as prices come down, such equipment is becoming more widely available.

The past five years have seen the development of the



Eye testing has come a long way from simple alphabet charts to incorporate sophisticated diagnostic equipment

scanning laser ophthalmoscope, which allows more accurate viewing of the retina. Hugely expensive, this has not yet reached the high street but is used in most eye hospitals. Another great advance has been the advent of day-case cataract surgery, performed in half an hour under local anaesthetic.

In the field of lenses, recent years have seen a move away from bifocals towards varifocals; better quality photocromatic lenses (that darken in bright sunlight); and the development of much thinner lenses with better scratch-resistant and anti-reflective coatings.

Developments in contact lenses have led to the growing popularity of disposable lenses.

On the surgical front, the latest buzz word is Lasik, commonly known as "flap and zap", a laser technique aimed at correcting myopia (short sight), which affects 10 per cent of the world's population. In the past two decades, more than 25,000 people in Britain have had moderate short sight corrected by photo-refractive keratotomy (laser surgery) or its precursor, radial keratotomy (using a scalpel to reshape the cornea). Using the

"flap and zap" technique, surgeons can remove more tissue without damaging the eye. Relatively few patients in Britain opt for this, however, eye surgery still being regarded with sensible caution — the long-term effects of such procedures are, as yet, unknown.

In the optical marketplace, a radical change was brought about by the 1986 deregulation of the sale of spectacles. Today the independent optometrist is in competition with large companies which can afford to operate on a high-volume, low-profit basis. Many optometrists have found that to survive, they must offer in-depth consultations and use the very latest technology.

Derek Spivack, a Mayfair optometrist, estimates the cost of his equipment at around £200,000. "Our charge for an hour's consultation hasn't altered in 12 years, but the service we offer has become increasingly sophisticated," he says. Mr Spivack offers new techniques such as advanced

'Windows' shed light on health

IT IS one of life's small ironies that the Royal National Institute for the Blind's eye health campaign is part-funded by the National Lottery, Ros Drinkwater writes.

The phrase "it could be you" takes on altogether more sinister overtones when applied to the number at risk from serious eye disease. A significant proportion of the population can expect to experience serious eye disorders, ranging from glaucoma to cataracts. According to the RNIB, more than 150,000 people, the equivalent of the population of Blackpool, have an eye disease they are completely unaware of — the International Glaucoma Association estimates that some 150,000 adults in Britain aged 40-plus have undetected glaucoma.

While physical fitness appears to be high on the nation's agenda, the eye has been described as the "Cinderella" organ, with scant attention paid to the importance of diet, exercise and, above all, regular eye tests, in maintaining good sight. More people put their lives at risk by driving with defective vision than by being over the drink and drive limit. Many children experience learning difficulties because of undiagnosed, often correctable, eye defects.

Everyone who sits in front of a computer screen runs the risk of developing eye strain. The RNIB recommends having an eye test at least every two years, unless the patient is diabetic, or there is history of eye disease in the family such as glaucoma, in which cases eyes should be tested annually. Children should have their first sight test before the age of three. While many eye defects are part of the natural process of aging, from aged 25 on, people of Afro-Caribbean descent are particularly at risk from glaucoma, which is a manageable disease if caught early. Left undetected, it can lead to irreversible blindness.

As part of its nationwide campaign the RNIB is calling for eye tests to be free to all aged 60 and over. "There are strong indications that many older people are needlessly losing their sight," says Sue Grindley, the manager of the RNIB's Eye Health programme campaign.

"What the nation needs to address is access to eyecare. Since the 1989 withdrawal of the free NHS eye examination, the rate of increase of those having their eyes tested has slowed down considerably, something of serious concern to eye bodies. Everyone should be able to have the eyecare they need, particularly those aged 60 and over. A half-hour test can save someone's sight. Can you think of a better investment?"

The RNIB's stand is endorsed by Nikki Sheridan, a family optometrist. "My advice to those caught in the poverty trap is, even if you can't afford new glasses, have your eyes tested regularly. What most people don't appreciate is that the eye is the window to the body; an eye test checks not just your sight, but the health of the entire body."

"Warning signs that should not be ignored are a drop in vision, different pupil size or loss of field of view — all of these can be a signal of something more sinister."

'A drop in vision can signal something more sinister'

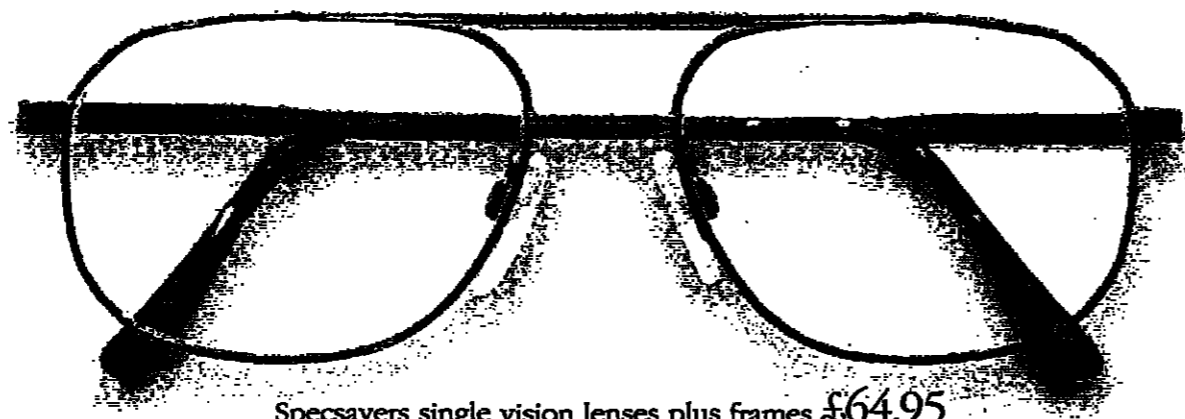
ter. Recently we had a patient who came to us because his mother had developed glaucoma. Finding increased pressure, I directed him to his GP, who referred him to a specialist, who diagnosed a brain tumour — happily in time for successful surgery."

So, how best to take care of our eyes? The RNIB advises eat a sensible diet, low in saturated fats and cholesterol-rich foods, high in carrots and green leaf vegetables; avoid smoking — a 1996 US study of 32,000 nurses found that smokers have a significantly greater risk of a condition known as age-related macular degeneration than non-smokers, the main cause of blindness in people aged over 65.

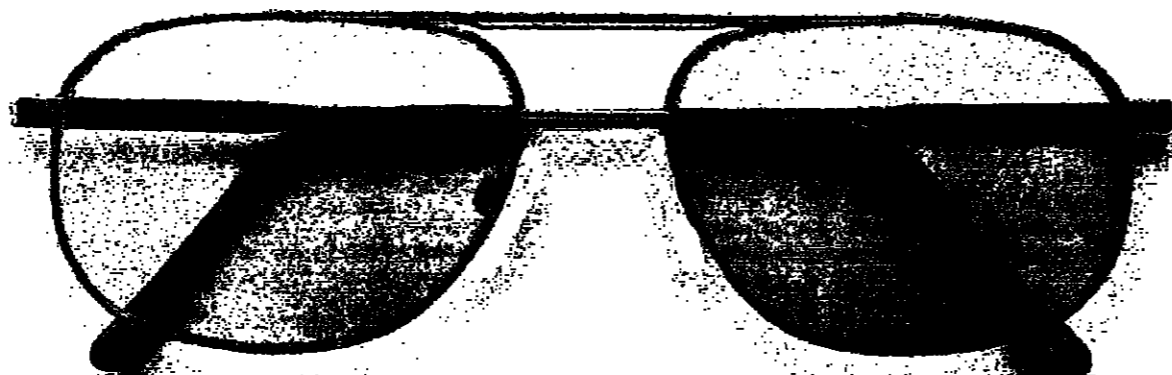
In addition, avoid straining your eyes, especially by reading in poor light — while one in four in Western countries is shortsighted, the condition is rare in illiterate societies. Computer users whose eyesight is poor may find a monochrome monitor better than a colour display. Protect your eyes from strong sunlight by choosing sunglasses with the correct UV factor — lenses should screen out 99 per cent of UV and 70 to 90 per cent of visible light; be aware that, with a little more care, 90 per cent of accidents to the eye could have been prevented.

Above all, do not wait until headaches and/or visual irregularity indicate that something is wrong. By then, it may be too late.

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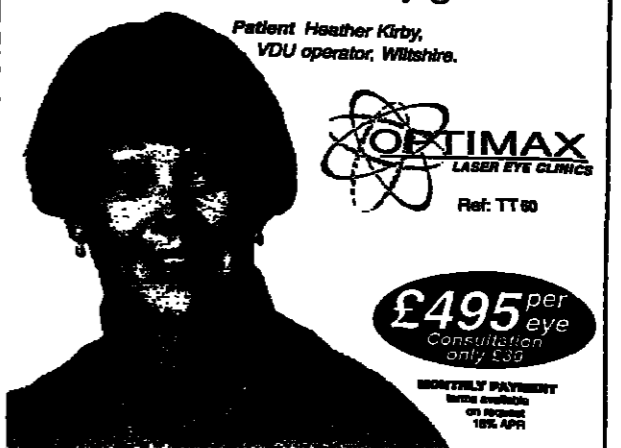


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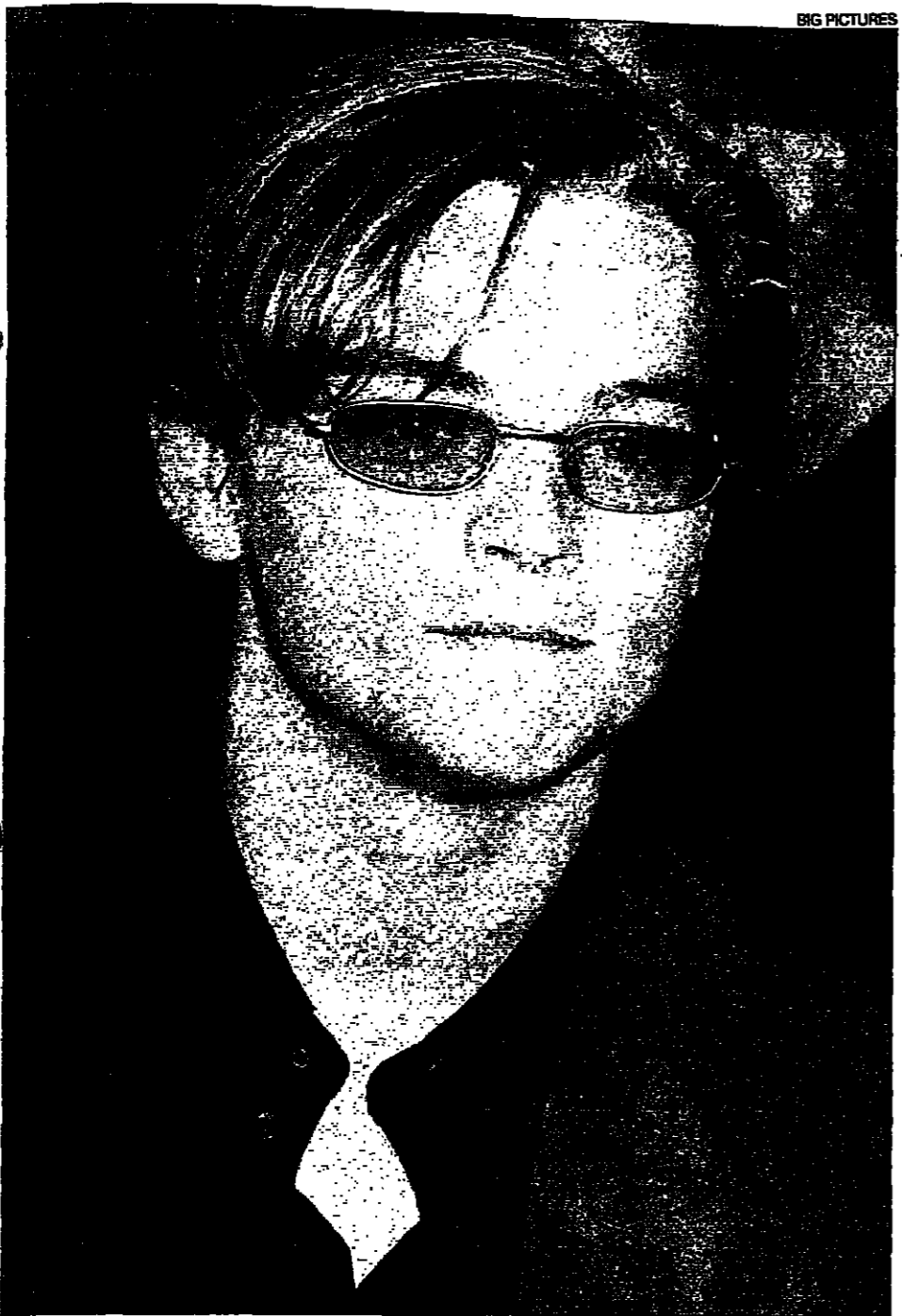
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هكذا من الأصل

High street deregulation has opened the gates to a fashion revolution in which glasses can be bought for fun, says Jennai Cox

Starring role for the fashion spectacles



Film stars use glasses to refine their image: Leonardo DiCaprio favours small frames

Yellow is out, pink very much in, as are mint green, baby blue and lovely lilac. And if you really want to turn heads this season, be seen in tinted tangerine.

In the virtual free-for-all after market deregulation in the late Eighties, the choice in colour and shape of spectacles has exploded. We no longer buy glasses just because we have a new prescription or want the old pair fixed; we are now buying them to suit our moods and lifestyles, or simply because we have seen a pair we like.

We may have seen them on a film, television or pop star. Celebrities such as Fosh and Scary Spice, Jarvis Cocker, Sophie Rhys-Jones, Kate Moss, Liz Hurley, Vic Reeves, Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Aniston (Rachel in *Friends*) have made them hip.

"Glasses have always been fashionable, but when pop stars were seen wearing them and models started strutting down the catwalk in spectacles, their appeal suddenly became mainstream," says Andrew Conway of Bowings Opticians in Fleet Street, London.

Fashion houses such as Versace, Dolce & Gabbana and Armani now produce or put their brands to glasses, making spectacles the most affordable item in the designer range. But customers are still not spending enough time choosing frames, says Ian Anderson, owner of the Eyewear Consultancy in London.

"A suit costs thousands of pounds and spends 80 per cent of its time in the wardrobe. People are reluctant to spend very much time or money on their glasses, yet they are on their face for most of the time."

More important than passing fashion considerations, Mr Anderson says, is that people should make sure glasses fit and suit their face and character. "Everyone has their own particular style. We have to take into consideration what customers do in their spare time and the clothes they wear." A wrong decision can affect someone's life for perhaps three years.

He recently fitted "a large woman with an over-the-top personality" with a gold, oval-framed pair of glasses featuring diamonds on each side. "They suited her wonderfully," he says, "but would have been useless on a fair-haired PA working in PR."

Persuading customers to try

recognise which aspects of a person's face should be accentuated and which parts camouflaged. With a passport photograph scanned into a computer, customers can also see what up to eight pairs of frames would look like on them. "It gives them the confidence to experiment," Ms Clark says.

The Italians, inventors of glasses in the 13th century, are leaders in spectacle fashion. Half the frames worn in Italy are made of plastic, compared with a fifth in the UK. Richard Crook, the managing director of Stepper, a frame-maker based in Kent, says the swing to plastic will gradually move here. "More can be done with colours in plastic," he says.

This season will see soft, simple shades and could also be one of those rare occasions when the worlds of fashion and style coincide. "Customers are clever; they won't always buy glasses just for the brand name," Mr Crook says. "They are starting to realise that a label is just that."

Stephanie McGuinness, the marketing director for Carl Zeiss, says technical advances have made frames thinner, flatter and lighter. "Aesthetically, thinner frames are more pleasing. There is no longer any need for the milk-bottle-bottom approach."

Scratch-resistant and anti-reflection coatings are also being more frequently recommended. For children and sports fans, anti-scratch glasses are particularly useful.

Have the chunky frames worn by Scary Spice set a fashion? "They still sell well," says Philip Burns, of Project Opticians in Soho. "But we are finding that as the millennium approaches, anything goes — as long as you have got the guts to wear them."



Scatty: Jennifer Aniston from *Friends* has the round look



Scary: Mel B from the Spice Girls has in-your-face grace

'Models started strutting down the catwalk in spectacles'

something new can be difficult. Since the range with which they are confronted is so vast, many tend to stick with what they had before. "People want to be adventurous but often need a little pushing," says Mr Anderson.

The opticians Dolland and Aitchison found the overwhelming choice of frames following deregulation deterred customers from going into their shops.

Irene Nathan, an image consultant, and Sue Clark, an optician, collaborated 18 months ago to develop Styleyes, an image service which takes into account the face shape, colouring, lifestyle and personality of the customer. "We realised the staff were trained on the technical side but had no knowledge of fashion," Ms Clark says. They have now all been taught to

Contactual obligations

Contact lenses should be fitted professionally and looked after properly, says Eve-Ann Prentice

LOOKING good can be a sight for sore eyes — or it can end in tears. Contact lenses and sunglasses are two ways of correcting poor sight that pander to vanity, yet they can do more harm than good if they are not chosen and used correctly.

Unless sunglasses have an ultraviolet filter, it is better not to wear them, because they can make the pupil dilate and let in even more harmful UV rays. And contact users must ensure that their hands, as well as the lenses and cases, are cleaned often and well. But at least contact lenses are prescribed, fitted and usually monitored by specialists, while sunglasses can be bought at market stalls.

Sales of contact lenses are soaring: more than three million people in Britain spent around £200 million on them last year, mostly on disposable types, which are seen as generally safer because there is less chance of dirt accumulating. Another £140 million was paid for lens cleaners and similar products.

The range of choice for contact lenses — thin plastic discs held in place by tears that can help short and long-sightedness, irregularly shaped corneas (astigmatism) and focusing problems caused by ageing — is increasing all the time. Rigid gas permeable lenses are made from firm plastics that let oxygen through well. They last longer than soft lenses and are often prescribed for cases of severe astigmatism.

Soft lenses account for 80 per cent of sales and are made of oxygen permeable plastic containing between 30 and 80 per cent water. Most people find these comfortable and they can be used to correct many sight problems.

Disposable soft lenses are worn for a given period then thrown away. Some are designed to be worn for just a day, saving the cost and hassle of cleaning them.

Tinted lenses can enhance or change the colour of the eye. Enhancing tints merely add to eye colour, while opaque tints mask the iris and make it appear a different shade. With the latter you see through a clear area in the centre of the lens. Both tints can be worn by those with no sight problems, but they must

be fitted by professionals and looked after in the same way as prescription lenses. Hard lenses are rarely worn nowadays and new materials are fast making them obsolete. UV protection lenses that block out up to 90 per cent of the sun's harmful rays are also available.

Looking after contact lenses is crucial. "Full instructions should be taken from your practitioner," says the independent Eyecare Information Service. "Proper care will keep them clean, comfortable and safe from bacteria. Use the products prescribed by your practitioner as some may not be suitable for you, or made for use with different types of lenses."

Basic advice on looking after contact lenses includes washing hands, never using bottled or tap water to clean lenses, never re-using cleaning solutions, and cleaning the lens case.

The tears that hold the lenses in place can also cause a build-up of proteins on them, which needs to be removed periodically. Contact lenses should always be removed at night, unless the professional who fitted them says there is no need. Trials are, however, under way on a new generation of high-performance extended-wear lenses that can be worn at night.

And although contact



Eye contact: hands need to be washed thoroughly and often

lenses are a boon to athletes, they should not be worn when swimming without goggles. This is less because of the risk of losing them than the damage that chlorine and seawater can cause.

The lenses should also be taken out when travelling by air because the lack of oxygen in aircraft cabins caused by air-conditioning systems af-

fects the moistness of the eye and can be harmful.

Peter Smeeth, the secretary-general of the Association of Contact Lens Manufacturers, stresses the need for professional advice and fitting of lenses. A court case is now under way concerning the supervision applied by a company that has been supplying contact lenses by mail order.

"We are also concerned about cosmetic contact lenses as these can be obtained without a prescription, therefore there is no supervision," says Mr Smeeth.

Sunglasses, meanwhile, pose special dangers to the unwary. Unless they carry the CE mark showing they conform to European Community standards, they may let in UV light, which can damage the lens, retina, cornea and conjunctiva.

Beware of misleading claims about UV protection, says the Eyecare Information Service. The sunglasses may be labelled "UV absorbant", which is meaningless unless the percentage of rays blocked is specified. "The colour of the lens does not affect its UV protection capability," says the organisation, "it is the shade number that counts." This ranges from 1.1 for cosmetic sunglasses to 4.1 for special uses such as skiing and for people with abnormal sensitivity to light.

"A lot of shops sell sunglasses but not all fit them properly. They are best fitted by a specialist practitioner," says Dr Michel Guillon, clinical director of the Westminster Eyecare Centre in London.

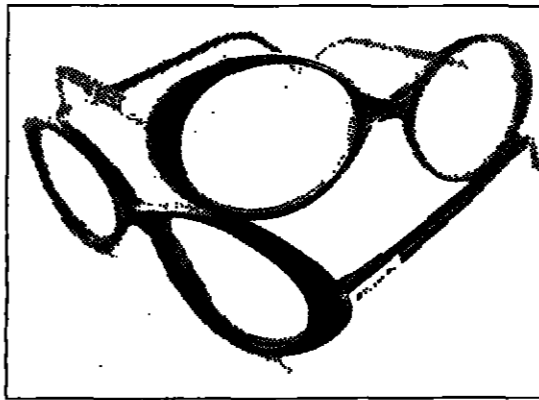
Sunglasses range in price from a few pounds to hundreds for designer shades. Contact lenses start at around £10 for disposable lenses that last a month, rising to £29 a month for those that can be thrown away every day and to about £85 for gas permeable. Cleaning solutions on average cost £9 a month.

For Eyecare Information Service leaflets send an a6 to EIS, Box 3397, London SE1 6DY.

The Association of Contact Lens Manufacturers can be found on the Internet at www.aclm.org.uk

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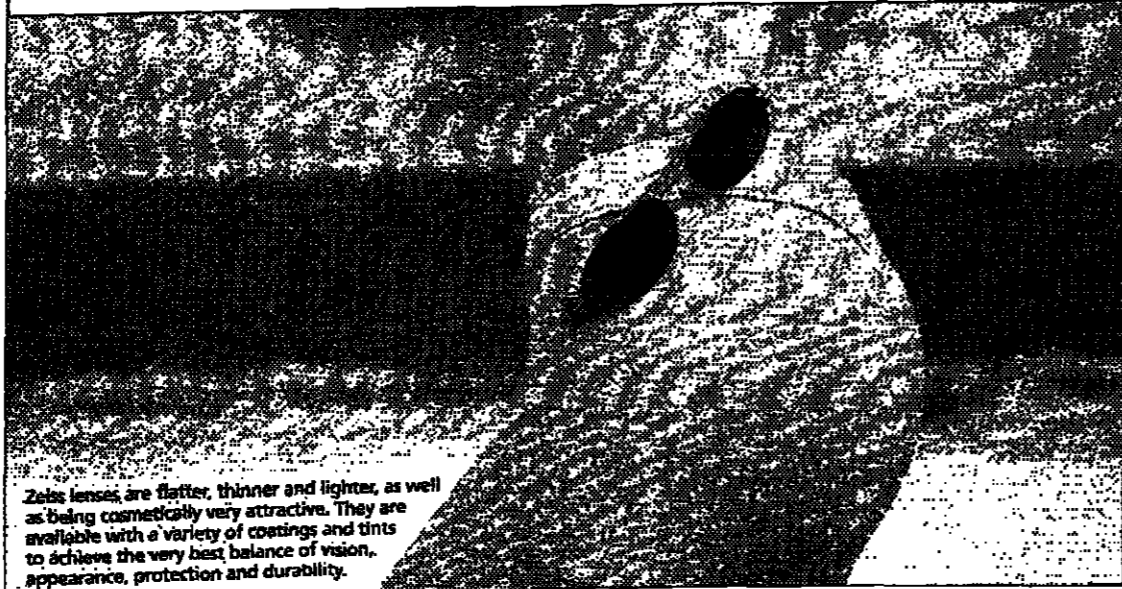
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NEWS

Shuttle diplomacy in London

The Middle East peace talks are expected to continue in London for a second day today after signs of hope arising out of Madeleine Albright's frantic shuttle diplomacy.

Cancer breakthrough predicted

Hopes of a cancer breakthrough were raised as separate teams of scientists said new drugs might be available early next century.

Euro verdict

France, Germany and Britain were treated to a torrent of scorn over the summit compromise that launched the euro.

Great escape

David Mitchell, the English teacher who was held hostage for 17 days by rebel tribesmen in Yemen, has told how a group of his students secretly helped to secure his release.

Mortar attack

Thousands of runners competed in the Belfast marathon yesterday in spite of a mortar attack by republican terrorists.

Manhood reclaimed

An Australian who did not talk to his father for 15 years is visiting Britain to advise parents on how to raise boys, and fathers on how to reclaim manhood.

Highland clearance

More than a 100 families face eviction from a holiday village set up by a Scottish laird 80 years ago to provide a country retreat for the poor of Clydeside.

Lake poisoned

Grasmere, the lake forever associated with the poet William Wordsworth, is dying, its waters poisoned by sewage and farm waste.

Moving pictures in the Hebrides

Britain's first mobile cinema, which opens today, will bring cultural relief to a population that has to travel up to 200 miles to watch the latest films.

Poll prediction

Labour faces a series of damaging defeats in traditional strongholds such as Sheffield and Islington in this week's council elections unless it is saved by a high turnout.

Job for the boy

Oscar Messing, the 10-week-old son of a Swedish politician, is an official delegate at an EU conference in Belfast today.

Bomber spared

The American Unabomber, Theodore Kaczynski, was sentenced to life in prison yesterday without the possibility of parole after being spared the death penalty.

In the Kohl bunker

German satirists have started to bare their teeth against Helmut Kohl, swapping years of polite, good-natured ribbing for some savage criticism.

Oil boom

Revenues from the new Western-run oil fields in the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan are set to spiral as production leaps to North Sea levels.

Presidential heir

George W. Bush is generating the kind of buzz that surrounds a promising racehorse, but he is avoiding questions about the race for the Presidency.



President Havel of the Czech Republic, with his wife, Dagmar, yesterday, on his first public appearance since surgery on April 14

BUSINESS

Maxwell legacy: Coopers & Lybrand, auditors to many of Robert Maxwell's companies, will be criticised today by their professional regulator.

Union dues: The transport union leader, Bill Morris, has called on the trade union movement to resist any softening of Labour's pre-election commitment to expand union recognition.

ISA rules: The Government is to introduce a "catmark" quality threshold for firms allowed to market savings accounts.

Venture fund: Civen has raised a £1.5 billion fund to finance new management buyouts.

Wall Street: Shares prices rose to a new high in New York.

SPORT

Snooker: The holder, Ken Doherty, moved to within two frames of John Higgins after winning five frames in the afternoon session in the world championship.

Rugby union: Newcastle beat Leicester 27-10 to move within one point of Saracens at the top of the Allied Dunbar Premiership.

Football: Arsenal beat Creighton 3-2 in the Women's FA Cup final to complete a holiday double for the Highbury club.

Cricket: Darren Robinson scored his third successive century for Essex, who recorded a comfortable victory over Ireland in the Benson and Hedges Cup.

ARTS

Get lost: Richard Cork sheds his inhibitions and loses himself in the gleaming, shimmering, highly polished sculptures of Anish Kapoor's stunning South Bank show.

Rare beauty: Sell-out concerts for even rare works such as the 1737 version of the Italian oratorio measured the success of the 21st London Handel Festival.

Epic showman: Valerie Grove meets Garth Drabinsky, the Canadian impresario who has never let childhood polio hold him back, as Show Boat testifies.

Dancing in mud: In a field outside Winchester, 30,000 people gathered for 17 hours of dance music, including Finley Quayle, Roni Size, the Chemical Brothers and Run DMC.

FEATURES

Bestseller: There is no one quite like her in America. Toni Morrison talks to Jason Cowley about her new novel, Paradise, which is likely to sell a million.

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: The downside of Viagra, the new male potency pill.

Lure of Claridge's: Raine, Lady Spencer, has been shopping there since she was six.

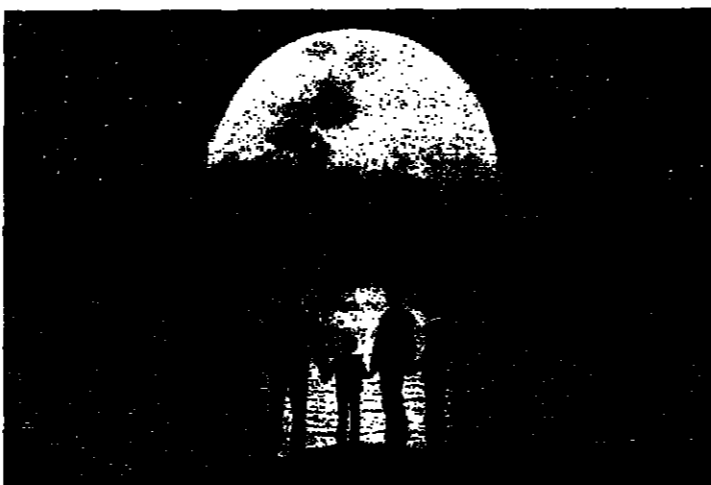
Society's duty: Gitta Sereny argues that it is not enough for society to condemn children such as Mary Bell and absolve itself. Society must act to change the future.

Out of sight: A special report on eyecare.

Joke bar: David Pannick on why the Bar Council's ruling on the telling of dubious jokes is funnier than the jokes.

Starting from cutting spending to welfare reforms, which actually mean cutting the safety network for the poor and unemployed.

Abortion: PoWs, plea to free Reginald Kray; illegal fisheries; bullying in schools; drink-driving dogs as pals.



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

INTERFACE: A trip to the dark side: can computers deliver holidays on the moon?

HOMES: How a street is being cheered up to make it London's smartest

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,783

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1 through 28.

- ACROSS
1 One of three on the river Tweed? (6).
5 Content to have a couple of rounds around this course? (8).
9 In by around about six, if not four (8).
10 Pledging without minimal sum up front as cover (6).
11 Face growth that's limited in August (8).
12 Reducing one's stature as conquering heroine (8).
13 Accommodation for one sort of industry (7).
16 Solved puzzles full of holes (7).
20 Burglar I encountered foolishly turned to run (8).
22 Victory started and finished in one (8).
23 Dresses and coordinates (6).
24 Can characters in poem show such refinement? (8).
25 Scoundrel appears to offend, taken in by constable (8).
26 Put back celebration in gallery until now (2,4).
DOWN
2 Import a horse (6).
3 Do boxing manager's work in car (8).
4 Fine as punishment (6).
5 Heavens above! This is excessive (3-4).
6 American philosopher, say, regarded as naive (4-4).
7 In claim I set out to be hostile (8).
8 Scot fighting with Gordon at the front (10).
12 Used time recorder (6-4).
14 Sound of bell limits a head doing this? (6).
15 Suspension of a governor over improper use of cane (8).
17 Gain attention (8).
18 One under the influence of pre-Roman roadmaker, according to Chesterton (8).
19 Unusually gifted youth leader unable to settle (7).
21 Draw out point legally established (6).

Latest Road and Weather conditions. UK Weather - All regions 0236 444 910. Includes sections for Weather by Fax, World City Weather, and Motorway.

General: England and Wales will be mostly cloudy with rain spreading to many areas, heaviest in the north. Includes sections for Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Moray Firth, rain clearing to give sunny spells and scattered showers.

Weather map of the UK showing cloud cover percentages and weather symbols. Includes a section for 'Changes to chart from noon: low H deepens while staying close to Faeroes; high A moves S and declines; high M stays slow moving over Mediterranean with little change'.

AA Car reports by fax. New and used car reports from the AA network of 195 cars. Includes contact information for AA Car Reports.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY. Table showing temperature and weather conditions across various UK locations like Aberdeen, Glasgow, London, Manchester, etc.

FRONT TIDES. Table showing tide times for various locations like Aberdeen, Belfast, Liverpool, London, etc. Includes a section for 'HOURS OF DARKNESS'.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING. Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997. Includes a logo for 'The original'.

Vertical sidebar on the right edge of the page containing various advertisements and notices, including 'INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY', 'Higgin', 'Stu', 'FINAL DETAILS', and 'European over Ber'.

THE TIMES 2

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



SPORT Arsenal's women celebrate cup win to follow men's success PAGES 27-37



LAW The Act that should lead to fewer building delays PAGES 41-43



BUSINESS Maxwell's auditor to be criticised by regulators PAGES 47-52

TELEVISION AND RADIO PAGES 50, 51

TUESDAY MAY 5 1998

Higgins sees advantage trimmed as world champion stages impressive fightback

Stubborn Doherty refuses to yield

BY PHIL YATES

JOHN HIGGINS entered the concluding session of a gripping Embassy world championship final against Ken Doherty at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, last night needing to pass the ultimate test of a snooker player's character in order to lift the trophy.



Higgins was still focusing on the title despite having his four-frame overnight lead halved by Doherty when the final resumed. Photograph: Gary M. Prior / Allsport

Doherty put together an 86 break in the 21st frame, after Higgins had gone in-off an attempted safety, before runs of 40 and 59 enabled the gap to be closed to 13-10. Momentum is a useful ally in such circumstances and, by now, Doherty was the beneficiary.

FINAL DETAILS

John Higgins leads Ken Doherty 13-11 (best of 35 frames)

FRAME SCORES (Higgins first): 34-73, 29-28, 28-7, 71-113, 73-82, 130-0, 0-99, 0-112, 7-66, 16-97, 66-2, 103-4, 66-3, 138-0, 70-89, 39-90, 89-0, 6-61, 130-0, 0-90, 1-99, 58-44, 44-82

only triumph this season. Yet he possesses a dogged determination and mental stamina ideally suited to the Crucible's unique demands — hence his unexpected win over Hendry 12 months ago and the ability to push Higgins so hard this time.

the nineteenth frame. A lengthy tactical exchange ensued before Higgins was obliged to take on an awkward red to a middle pocket. He overcut the ball and Doherty stepped in with a decisive 55. Despite having produced

two flawless frames, Doherty still left the arena for the 15-minute intermission starting at a 12-8 deficit. Higgins had won the eighteenth frame with an 89 break and the twentieth with a positionally excellent — and statistically significant —

130 total clearance. It meant that, for the third time during the championship, he had compiled three century breaks in a match. Higgins made three in four frames against Anthony Hamilton in the second round and an unpre-

cedented three in three against John Parrott in the quarter-finals. Higgins's latter effort was his twelfth century in the event this year. That equalled the record number at the Crucible, set by Hendry en route to

winning the fifth of his six world titles in 1995. It was also a joint record for any world-ranking tournament — Hendry constructed 12 during the 1994 United Kingdom championship. When Higgins began to

dominate in the semi-finals, Ronnie O'Sullivan, a more naturally talented but less temperamentally solid player than Doherty, had no answer. In contrast, adversity brought the best out of the stubborn Dubliner.

European worry over Bergkamp

BY MATT DICKINSON

THEY had not even begun counting the prize-money for winning the FA Carling Premiership yesterday when Arsenal were already making plans to spend it. A lucrative, new five-year contract for Arsène Wenger, the club's acclimated manager, who has 12 months left on his present deal, will be the least he deserves. New recruits are also on the agenda, with at least £10 million in Wenger's hands, yet what Arsenal really covets this summer — a cure for Dennis Bergkamp's fear of flying.

Arsenal have five away trips, perhaps as far as Russia or Turkey, before the quarter-finals begin. "My main problem is with Dennis, because we could be without him for some important games next season," Wenger said. "In the Champions' League, it might be impossible for him to drive to certain countries. It may be that it would put too much strain on him. The Champions' League is a good challenge for us, but we will need more cover in depth."

As Arsenal let their aspirations wander from the championship to the Champions' League yesterday, the non-flying Dutchman's phobia remained the biggest barrier to European Cup success for a team that otherwise appears well equipped to meet the challenge. Bergkamp refuses to countenance help even from Eilisen Drewery and his inability to travel to Greece this season cost Arsenal a 1-0 first-leg defeat by PAOK Salonika in the first round of the Uefa Cup, from which they could not recover. While Wenger is justified in claiming that Arsenal have proved that they can cope without the PFA Player and Footballer of the Year on the domestic front, it seems inconceivable that they can prosper against the most disciplined and miserly defences in Europe without him.

Morever, it is a problem that will be exacerbated by the almost certain expansion of the Champions' League next season to groups of six, a change that will ensure

Deposed champions' failings are disguised by victory

Manchester United 3 Leeds United 0

BY DAVID MADDOCK

CHAMPIONS no longer, but defiant to the end, Manchester United supported brave words from their manager with a typically competent victory yesterday. Yet, for all the ease with which they brushed aside Leeds United, there was something missing and it was not just the FA Carling Premiership trophy, which normally finds itself tossed around Old Trafford at this time of year.

their best is yet to come, and I am determined to see them fulfil their great promise," Ferguson wrote. "That may be so, but Ferguson will need to find a forward of high quality to add a sense of unpredictability to his disciplined side. Against Leeds, Sheringham was his usual neat self and Cole was typically industrious, but rarely struck fear into Leeds hearts. Giggs did and Beckham, too, with his powerful running and decisive crossing. United have refined their wing play to devastatingly simple effect: no frills, just stamina and determination. Against a side as uninterested as Leeds, it worked wonderfully. Giggs secured the fiftieth League goal of his career in the sixth minute and effectively killed off the game.

Harte lost his position on the left, Gary Neville invaded the gaping hole and crossed with intelligence to allow Giggs a free header at the far post. A second goal followed as Leeds sat back and invited waves of Manchester United attacks. Again it was a simple manoeuvre. Irwin crossing deep from the left and Sheringham rising, only to be bundled to the ground by a masterpiece of incompetent timing from Harte. Irwin, steady as ever, rolled home the penalty. Leeds flickered briefly with Bowyer stoking the fire, but after Gary Willard, the referee, missed an obvious penalty claim when Butt handled, United stroled to victory. The third goal arrived on 58 min-



Irwin celebrates his penalty for Manchester United

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RUGBY UNION: LEICESTER HEAVILY PUNISHED FOR THEIR INDISCIPLINE BY CLINICAL FINISHING

Newcastle keep up standards in pursuit of title

Newcastle.....27
Leicester.....10

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ONLY two hurdles now remain between Newcastle and the Allied Dunbar Premiership title. A far longer race remains for Leicester if they are to regain the unity of purpose that has so characterised their approach over many years but that has been disguised with two recent dismissals, the second at Ganshead yesterday when Will Greenwood, the England centre, was sent off for a butt.

Leicester line, the climax of a match in which three yellow cards were distributed, to the Leicester props. Darren Garforth and Graham Rowntree, and to Richard Arnold, of Newcastle. "Whenever we play against Newcastle there always seems to be a problem," Dean Richards, the Leicester manager, said. "After the clubs met at Welford Road in December, Bob Dwyer, then the Leicester director of rugby, accused Newcastle of organised cheating, but their two first-half tries were as clean as a whistle."

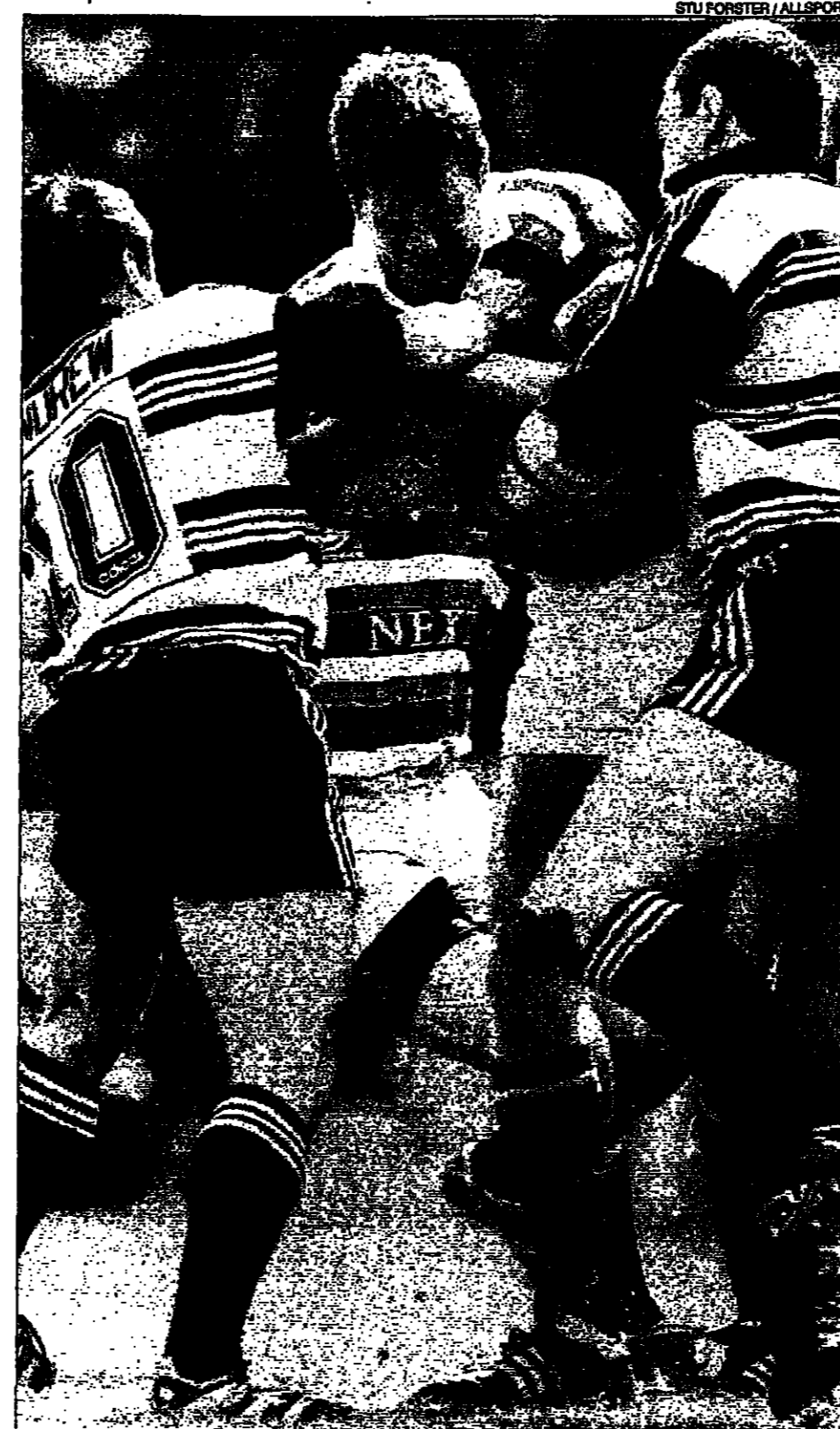
TABLE

Table with columns: Team, P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts. Rows include Saracens, Newcastle, Bath, Richmond, Leicester, Gloucester, Sale, Northampton, Wasps, Harlequins, London Irish, Bristol.

MATCHES TO COME: Saracens May 16; Northampton (h); Newcastle May 11; Bath (h); May 17; Harlequins (a)

wind in the first half and used it to less than good effect. Even so, they created two attacking positions in the Leicester 22 and scored from each of them with a proficiency that Leicester seldom came close to matching. They also made three perceptive changes in personnel at the interval, among them Peter Walton, whose presence has made a significant difference in more than just this match.

judges sorted out the miscrants in the brawl that occurred after the Leicester front row were penalised five metres from their own line. Newcastle did well to remain calm and patiently continue their bombardment before Walton, all 18st of him, crashed through the defence. Leicester had far more of the game in the first half but handling errors let them down even so, they remained in contention at the interval, only four points adrift with the use of the wind to come. Their defence was bamboozled when Ryan broke from a close-range scrum and slipped a reverse pass to Armstrong, who was untouched as he crossed the line. Stransky recovered three points with a penalty goal while Newcastle, profiting from the penalty that followed Rowntree's yellow card, scored direct from the lineout. Their experienced half backs gave young Wilkinson the chance of an inside pass to Lam and nothing could stop the powerful Samoan seizing the try. Yet Leicester conjured a try of their own when they drove a lineout ten metres, their backs joined in and Back emerged from the heap over the Newcastle line with the ball. Miller joined the injury list when he was taken out in pursuit of a loose ball, an incident that might have merited more than a penalty, but Leicester gritted their teeth as Newcastle picked up the pace of the game. Whenever they approached the Newcastle 22, however, they contributed to their own downfall and the tide turned. When the dam broke, it did with a rush. Tuigamala's power in midfield sucking in more defenders than Leicester could afford, Walton's try was effectively the winning of the game but, in the confusion that followed Greenwood's dismissal, Andrew kicked two penalty goals to emphasise Newcastle's statement of intent. The championship pendulum is swinging back to the North East.



Andrew, left, grapples with Greenwood during the ill-tempered match yesterday

South Africans dominate squad for Twickenham

WHATEVER the strictures of the International Rugby Board over contact between England's leading clubs and the outside world, the organisers of the World XV that will play in the Sanyo Cup match at Twickenham on May 23 confidently announced a 23-strong squad yesterday (David Hands writes). The English club champions, either Saracens or Newcastle, will meet a team with a strong South African presence. The six South Africans include Chester Williams, one of the heroes of the 1995 World Cup, but who has suffered

cruelly from knee injuries since then. There are also places for three of the Five Nations Championship captains, Raphael Ibañez, Robert Howley and Lawrence Dallaglio, though whether the England captain will have a role to play given his shoulder problems, remains to be seen.

by Andrew, risks a 60-day ban that would add him to a list of unavailable England players already including Mike Catt, Tony Underwood, David Rees, Richard Hill and Tim Rodber. "Will was very unfortunate," Andrew, the Newcastle director of rugby, said. "It was more of a kiss really, but it was done right in front of Ed. I would certainly recommend that the sending-off was sufficient."

Greenwood may miss tour

WILL GREENWOOD, the Leicester centre, could miss the England tour of the southern hemisphere after being sent off in the Allied Dunbar Premiership game with Newcastle yesterday. He is the second Leicester player to be given a red card within two months, Martin Corry suffering a similar fate against Northampton in March. Ed Morrison, England's premier referee, had no option but to order Greenwood off after he had issued a general warning to both teams. The centre head-butted Rob Andrew as the two disengaged on the ground under the nose of the official and, despite placatory noises made

both teams traded punches on the Leicester line. "Will isn't the type of person to go around head-butting," Dean Richards, the Leicester manager, said. "He's a very placid sort who plays rugby because he enjoys the game. He's not one of the head-cases you sometimes get." Greenwood, 25, can play until his case is heard, but England hope to name the tour party next Tuesday and his place must be in doubt. Three yellow cards were issued in a match that ended with Neil Back, the Leicester flanker, coming off with blood streaming from his head and suggesting that his thumb had been bitten.

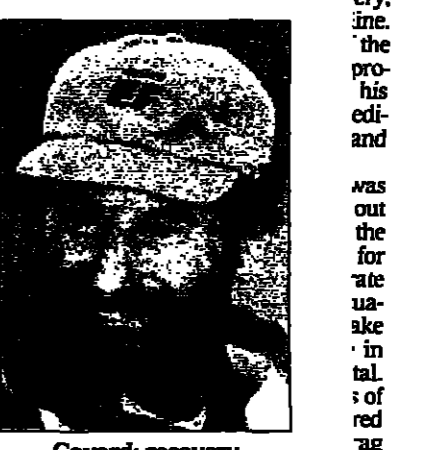
SAILING

Cayard to keep close watch on Swedish Match

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER her disappointing seventh place finish into her home port of Baltimore at the end of leg seven, the crew of Chesapeake Racing, skippered by John Kostecky, were yesterday still enjoying the satisfaction of leading the Whitbread Round the World Race fleet as it headed out across the Atlantic to La Rochelle. Following a light upwind start on Sunday, the crews were kept busy all of the first night as the boats either tacked, reached or ran in light and shifty conditions down Chesapeake Bay. There were no reports of any foul-ups with lobster pots, though at least one yacht, BrunelSunery, may have hit the ground briefly. The sailing was typically tight with little more than six miles separating first and last yesterday as the yachts passed between Cape Henry and Cape Charles at the entrance to the Bay, beating into a 10-knot southeasterly. Knut Frostad, skipper of Innovation Kvaerner, who was lying in fourth place, said the first night was much more the sort of sailing he had expected on the Chesapeake.

stopovers in Baltimore and Annapolis and for the restart and the skippers have been impressed with the race's impact in America where sailing struggles against the leading sports even more than it does here. Cayard said: "It made us feel good to be part of a sport that was graced with such strong enthusiasm in our home country." Andy Beadsworth, of Great Britain, sailing with Glyn Charles, Richard Sydenham, Nick Pearson and Chris Gowers, won his first Grade 1 match racing event with victory in the ACI Cup in Croatia. Beadsworth beat Dean Barker, of New Zealand, 3-0 in the final. Marcus Wieser, of Germany, was third and Magnus Holmberg, of Sweden, fourth.



Cayard: recovery

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CYCLING

Clay keeps Brite on glory trail

BY PETER BRYAN

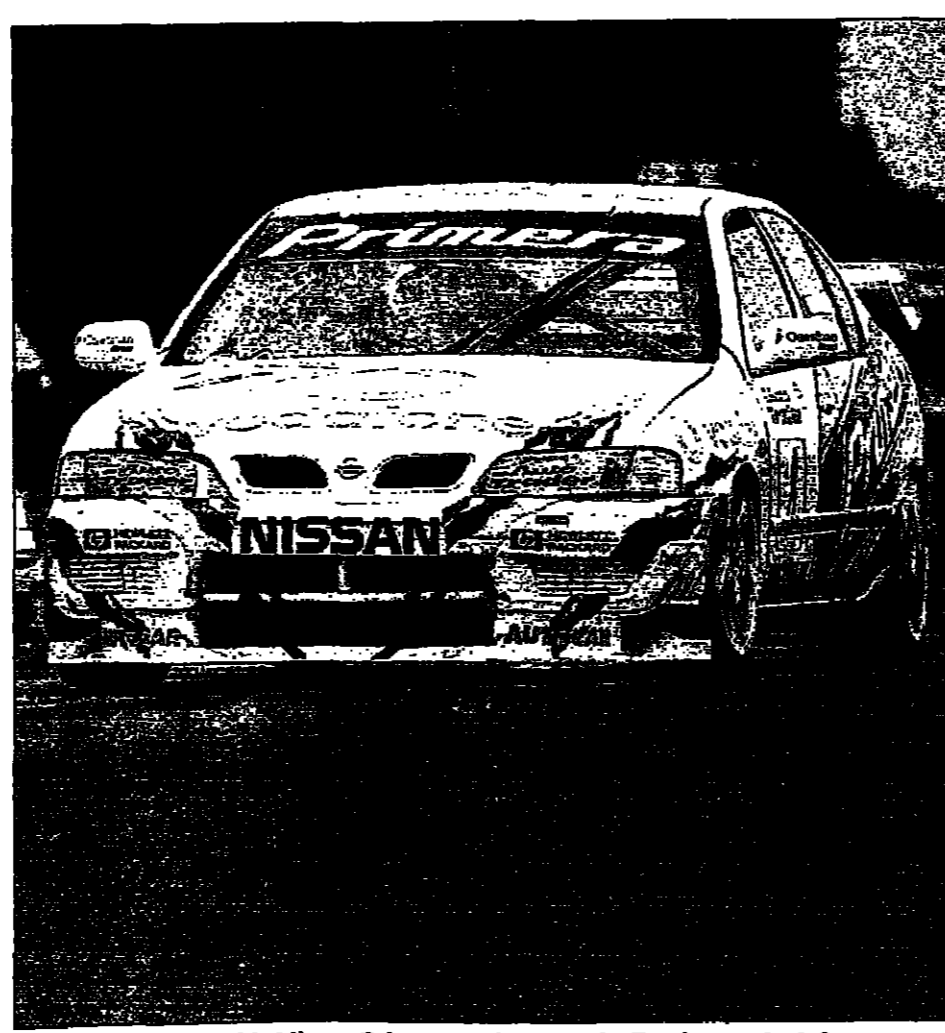
BEFORE the start of the four-day, 260-mile Travelwise Tour of Lancashire on Friday there were some doubts about the Brite team's ability to maintain its season-long dominance. But those of little faith became fewer as the race progressed, with a victorious Jon Clay, the Brite captain, setting the standards from the first stage. However, because of intermediate sprint time bonuses, the first rider to wear the yellow jersey was Kevin Dawson, who held a 15sec lead over Clay. From the end of day two, however, the jersey was Clay's and remained so through to yesterday's finish of the final Leagrave Fell 87-mile stage, won by Merseyside Gary Adamson, for whom it was a career-best victory. Clay's finishing position of 19th in a field of 57 riders was unimportant after he had started the day with 67 and 75sec advantages respectively over Chris Newton and Matthew Illingworth, his Brite colleagues. Both Newton and Illingworth gained time bonuses of 3sec and 4sec from intermediate sprints in an effort to protect their team leader. Clay praised his team's efforts and added: "It gives us hope for the Prutour later this month where we will be up against tough opposition." Clay defends his British 10-miles time-trial title near Lincoln next weekend and then makes a helicopter dash to the 160km Lincoln grand prix.

MOTOR RACING: PEOPLE'S FAVOURITE TRADES A FEW SECRETS AT DONINGTON

Mansell begins new learning curve

BY KEVIN EASON

THE 11-year-old looked Nigel Mansell in the eye and slapped his right boot onto the table. Mansell signed it and the smug-nosed boy, who had stood hopping on one leg in a queue to get his precious signature, pulled on his brown boot and wandered away into the Donington Park crowd happy. Mansell-mania broke out at the Auto Trader RAC Touring Car championship yesterday — and he was not even driving. He was watching, though, and watching closely, for Donington is where the former world champion of Formula One will make his debut in a Ford Mondeo in the championship next month. In between signing autographs — at one sitting yesterday afternoon he gave away more than 600 signed pictures — Mansell was studying the art of touring cars. He stalked the paddock and interrogated the drivers; he spent nearly an hour picking the brains of Derek Warwick, the head of the Vauxhall team and an old Formula One adversary, a rival he will do well to heed after Vauxhall's showing yesterday. John Cleland won the 12-lap sprint and was third in the 36-lap feature race to give Vauxhall its first victory in two years and notch his best performance since he won the championship for the company in 1995. Warwick has revived the Vauxhall campaign, something that Mansell is being expected to do for Ford after three years without success. Will Hoy won at Silverstone last time out, but in a rain-



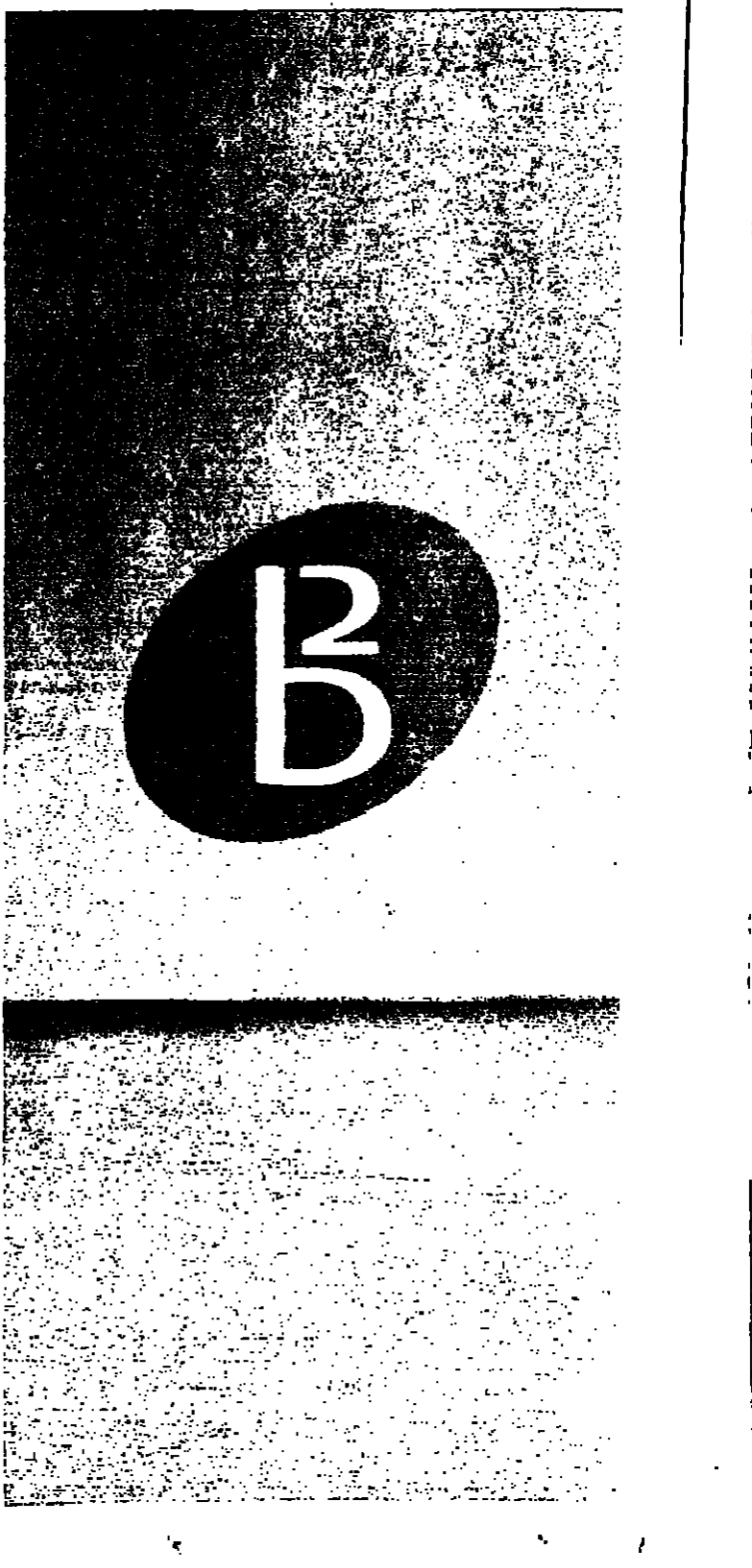
David Leslie drives his Nissan Primera to victory in the Donington Park feature race

disrupted race; yesterday reality dawned, as Mansell put it, with Hoy's Mondeo managing a best eighth place from two races. Just to underline how open this championship is, David Leslie won the feature race for Nissan, his second victory of the season. The drive of the

day, though, came from Rickard Rydell, who was forced to start the feature race from the back of the grid after a qualifying infringement, yet finished seventh, his Volvo 540 pipped on the line by the bonnet length of Anthony Reid's Nissan Primera. Up in the control tower,

Mansell was taking it all in, calculating what it will take to enter a championship in full swing with a realistic chance of winning in a new car and working with a new team. "You can learn a lot from looking at the other teams," he said. "I looked at the Vauxhall set-up in the paddock and I

was really impressed with what Derek Warwick has done. We have had a win but today showed where we really are. The question is whether we are in it to win or to make up the numbers. We have to get everybody fired up, but we can do it." Getting people fired up is a speciality. He may have not always seen eye to eye with the media, but "the people" love him, swelling a Donington crowd that thronged wherever he appeared. "Through Mansell, 44, still talks of a return to Formula One or the United States, where he completed his unique back-to-back double of F1 and IndyCar titles, touring cars offers his most realistic chance of winning another championship, possibly next season. Negotiations are going on, but he emphasised that a decision on his future would come "within weeks". Watching him work the crowd yesterday seemed to underline his determination to appear regularly in front of the spectators whose adoration has not waned, even five years after he last raced in Britain. "There are so many people here," he said. "It is so rewarding. Kids are still being named after me and after the relationship I had with the people, they still recognise me, and want to see me." "I have this opportunity to develop the team and I hope it goes on from strength to strength, not just this year but next year. I wouldn't rule out a full-time return to trying for a championship, but whether it is with the Ford Motor Company or another company we shall have to see."



Benson and Hedges Cup: Leicestershire bowlers reprieved while Surrey and Yorkshire cruise

Simmons in control as Lewis has last laugh

By Michael Henderson

LEICESTER (Warwickshire won toss): Leicestershire (2pts) beat Warwickshire by three wickets

CHRIS LEWIS will not forget this game in a hurry. He dropped a dolly in the gully off the third ball of the day, failed to take a wicket and was run out first ball, but he ended up wearing a grin as the winning captain.

The man who made it possible was the man who ran Lewis out, when he called him for a reckless single. Phil Simmons is a popular man at Grace Road, deservedly, and he added another cubit to his reputation yesterday.

Simmons needed only 75 balls for his runs, and 24 of them came off four hits. It took a fine catch to get him, Penney making ground swiftly to hold the ball by his boots, and Warwickshire's excited response was evident in the way they embraced the catcher.

Nixon, the sturdy wicketkeeper, sent the next ball, from Giles, soaring over the ropes at mid-wicket, then squeezed four more runs in the same area by bisecting the men on the boundary. Nixon's winning hit, another six, gave him 36 runs from 33 balls, just the sort of bracing effort his team needed.

What a curious match it was. No fewer than 53 runs in the Warwickshire score of 263

for six came in extras, a competition record. Inexcusably, there were 31 wides, including one, from Simmons, that hurried Nixon to the long-leg boundary. Mullally bowled 11, and Mills sent down 10 in four overs, including five in his last, after which Lewis stood him down out of compassion. Two of those wides, bowled from the pavilion end, hardly landed on the cut hit.

When Giddins, bowling the first ball of the Leicestershire innings, sent it to the same spot as Simmons, with similar effect, the mind boggled. A crowd of 4,000 was astonished by this collective incompetence and Jack Birkenhead, the Leicestershire coach, declared it "crap".

The brightest batting of the day, predictably, came from Lara, though he always gives the bowlers a chance. He was just settling into a destructive rhythm when he drove a return catch to Mason, the off spinner, who had removed Hemp the over before. Lara clearly felt it was a bump ball — umpire Kitchen didn't.

Brown, with 60, and Penney, who made an unbeaten 57, then added 116 in 20 overs. It was sensible batting and helped give their side a total that, though not intimidating, would take some getting if they bowled tidily. Sutcliffe and Maddy growled a bit at the start, though, and Simmons bared his teeth later.

No trip to this ground would be complete without a visit to The Meet, a sort of canteen where the quality of the food is matched by the alertness of the staff. A request for a cheese and onion pasty, which turned out to be inedible, was met within 20 minutes: after 15 of those minutes they actually put it in the microwave! It's a cracking spot, Grace Road!



Graham Thorpe, the Surrey batsman, hits out off the bowling of Davies, of the British Universities, at The Oval

Lehmann century exacts revenge

By Richard Hobson

DERBY (Derbyshire won toss): Yorkshire (2pts) beat Derbyshire by 36 runs

YORKSHIRE could have made a more emphatic start to the season — but only just. They sit atop the British Assurance county championship, and on the verge of qualifying for the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Cup after a third win yesterday. The sole blemish is a defeat in the Axa League.

As they centered to victory, the fact that Derbyshire struggled to control the experiment or adjust their line for the left-handers, conceding 16 runs in wide.

When Lehmann arrived in county cricket last year there were those who questioned whether he could adapt to English conditions. He confounded cynics with such certainty that Yorkshire retained him ahead of Michael Bevan. He has since made his Test debut and with the Ashes series next winter in mind it was perhaps as well that David Lloyd, the England coach, arrived from Leicester

slip area ricocheted for runs off the glove of Krikken. Earlier in the over the hyperactive wicketkeeper had stumped McGrath (55) off a leg-side wide. Bob White, the third umpire, gave the decision after studying television replays. Parker and Hamilton gave later support in the closing stages.

White Yorkshire are wringing good value again from Lehmann. Derbyshire have suffered misfortune with their own overseas player. Michael Slater broke his hand while fielding on the first day of the championship season and will see a specialist.

In his absence, Derbyshire slipped to 29 for two against intelligent new ball bowling by Silverwood. Cork was bowled attempting to play through the off side while Rollins shouldered arms. Blackwell pulled to square leg, Clarke failed to get forward to White and although Barnett completed a half-century from 83 balls he never gave the impression of being able to raise the tempo.



Lehmann: sparkling form

YESTERDAY'S BENSON AND HEDGES CUP SCOREBOARDS

Scoreboards for various cricket matches including Derbyshire v Yorkshire, Leicestershire v Warwickshire, Essex v Ireland, Northamptonshire v Nottinghamshire, Worcestershire v Scotland, and Gloucestershire v Somerset. Includes group tables and match details.

Bowlers shine but likely to prove Surrey's weak point

By Rupert Cox

THE OVAL (Surrey won toss): Surrey (2pts) beat British Universities by 105 runs

ALTHOUGH the British Universities remain winless after three matches of the Benson and Hedges Cup, they have effected more than the odd flutter. Somerset and Hampshire were both fortunate to escape defeat and, yesterday, at The Oval, Surrey flirted with a similar consequence for much of the first session.

Ultimately, the holders retained their 100 per cent record in the competition by dint of an efficient bowling display that ensured another convincing victory.

Just like last summer, victory for Surrey leaves a straight fight in Group C with Kent for the right to stage a home quarter-final. The teams meet on Wednesday at Canterbury and the match will give a truer reflection of Surrey's capacity to retain the trophy.

This season they have used the Hollis brothers and Mark Butcher behind Martin Bicknell, while Nadeem Shafiq and Jason Ratcliffe have batted at seven and eight, giving a top-sided impression. The batting is laden with class, but the bowling could suffer under pressure. What price a verdant tinge at Canterbury? After Surrey had won the toss and elected to bat, all eyes turned to Alec Stewart, the man widely expected to be announced as England captain at Lord's this morning.

With the tone set, Surrey meandered along in fits and starts. All their batsmen obtained a start, but failed to grab the initiative to ensure a score in excess of 300. Despite a hint of a lack of pace, evidenced by the batsmen caught in the inner ring of fielders playing too early, Surrey's extravagance and the students' enthusiasm in the field disrupted the home team's momentum to the extent that they failed to bat out their 50 overs.

While Ally Brown failed to glean his customary fluency the innings took on a sedate pace, until the ninth over, when he swung Martin-Jenkins over the square-leg boundary. But he lazily clipped Leather to short fine leg, and Ben Hollis fell to Mark Chilton's first delivery, waiving across the line.

Chilton, another player off the Manchester Grammar production-line, mixed up his pace, at a niggling slow medium, to collect four for 28 and the Gold Award.

When Mark Butcher was involved in another run out with Graham Thorpe, the score had slipped to 124 for four. Although the run-rate touched six an over, the situation required Adam Hollis and Thorpe to consolidate in order to set an imposing total. The Universities' chances of making their target foundered immediately when Anurag Singh was leg-before to Martin Bicknell. James Pymont and Greg Lovridge added 50 for the third wicket in 47 balls but, although Lovridge, a man with one Test match for New Zealand behind him, and Will House struck some lusty blows their dismissals allowed Surrey to coast to victory with more than six overs to spare. The senior Hollis was able to share the bowling duties and rest Bicknell from too much exertion, in readiness for Wednesday.

Advertisement for 'THE TIMES ADVENTURES FROM £5'. Includes a coupon for booking activities like Bungee Jumping, Tiger Moth Flying, Hot Air Ballooning, and Microlighting. Features a large image of a person in a hot air balloon basket.

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Injuries add further weight to question of safety

It has always been the boast of the British Boxing Board of Control (BBBC) that its standards of safety in the ring are the highest in the world...

injured in a bout with Drew Docherty; Chris Henry, a cruiserweight, who was taken to hospital after collapsing in his bout with Dominic Negus last June...

Srikumar Sen, boxing correspondent, believes closer checks may be the only way to prevent another tragedy in the sport

test, Eubank went in for attention to a badly cut eye and a check up for head injuries. He left hospital two days later saying that he was in good shape and gave no hint of contemplating retirement.

Over the years, all sorts of ideas have been put forward: wearing of headguards, shorter rounds, shorter contests and longer rest periods.

and recovery time, would leave them fitter and stronger to inflict greater injuries; to weigh in a week before could lead to big weight discrepancies on the night.

Bigger gloves and bonus points for good boxing skills would help, but, as the result would be fewer knockouts, the customers would not be happy.

usually is. He appeared to tire and lose his boxing moves and took punches to the head that normally would have landed on his gloves.

David Powell, athletics correspondent, profiles the remarkable Williams triplets

British students bow to sister act

JUST outside the tent where the athletes were obliged to report ten minutes before competition, Susan and Helen Williams looked anxious. They were about to run in the 200 metres final of the British Universities championships at Bath yesterday, but it was not themselves they were tense for.

When one does badly, it has a knock-on effect. "On this occasion, Elizabeth took the bronze medal and pronounced that she had run a good race. True to the Karageorghis theory, not to mention the formbook, Susan went out in the next women's final and completed a sprint double.

played a significant part in helping their university finish second to Loughborough after three days of team competition. The triplets are, Karageorghis said, "a team within a team".



Helen, left, Susan and Elizabeth Williams have made sprinting a family matter. Photograph: Tim Holt

carry on training." The greatest promise, so far, has been shown by Susan. A former world schools under-18 200 metres champion, she has set her sights on representing England at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur this year.

ship. I cannot set myself long-term goals." For the time being, second-hand cars are keeping the Williamses running. Their parents own a used-car business.

said, "Tenerife this year cost about £600 for each of us." All three have remained loyal to Walton Athletic Club, though it is, according to Elizabeth, "a very small club and not many people have heard of it".

■ TENNIS: Pete Sampras, the No 1 seed, ended his four-year wait for a title on clay by holding off Jason Stoltenberg, the No 2 seed, of Australia 6-7, 6-3, 7-6, in the final of the AT&T Challenge in Atlanta.

RUGBY LEAGUE: REJUVENATED CLUBS SERVE UP TRY SPREE

Bramley in apple-pie order

Oldham 32
Bramley 50
By PETER WILSON

ary Park, it is Bramley who appear to have made a better start to their second year over Oldham in less than two weeks and it will be a surprise if they are not one of the three clubs that will be promoted from the second division.

that Ian Darkes managed only two successful kicks from eight attempts. They also crossed the line twice only to drop the ball when it seemed easier to touch down.

SWIMMING: CARDIFF POOL BATHED IN ACHIEVEMENT CLOSES

Planners pull plug on Empire

SWIMMERS took the final plunge at the Empire Pool, Cardiff, last night as developers of the Millennium Stadium, which will also engulf the old Cardiff Arms Park ground and include a cinema, shops and restaurants, prepared to kick into touch one of the most famous baths in Britain after 40 years.

Judy Grinham, Anita Lonsburgh, Chris Gosden and Diana Wilkinson. The four were presented with tiles from the pool yesterday.

Plans for a replacement for the Empire have suffered several setbacks. Cardiff City Council has until July to present plans to Sportlink in order to qualify for £9 million of National Lottery funds.

■ BOWLS: England reclaimed the British relay championships at Mytchett near Aldershot yesterday. Marni Ward, Bill Edwards and Jamie Stevenson won the men's title ahead of the East Pennines club from Huddersfield. Karen Dalton, Helen Hargreaves and Jenny James beat Sheffield University in second place in the women's event.

Table with 2 columns: Event Name, Score/Result. Includes Athletics (500m, 1000m), Basketball (Blowmiser Championship), Baseball (National League), Cycling (Road Races).

Table with 2 columns: Event Name, Score/Result. Includes Football (FA Cup, Spalding Cup), Cricket (Benson and Hedges Cup), Rugby League (Oldham vs Bramley).

Table with 2 columns: Event Name, Score/Result. Includes Cricket (Lancashire vs Warwickshire), Football (Wales vs Scotland), Rugby League (Oldham vs Bramley).

Table with 2 columns: Event Name, Score/Result. Includes Football (Wales vs Scotland), Rugby League (Oldham vs Bramley), Swimming (Cardiff Pool closure).

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Ericsson GH688 advertisement. Features: Normally \$50, NOT THE GA628, BUT TOP OF THE RANGE EXECUTIVE LIGHTWEIGHT GH688. THIS WEEK ONLY. 1/2 PRICE LINE RENTAL FOR 3 MONTHS. PLUS FREE minimum 20 minutes of calls per month for life, FREE car charger, FREE leather case, FREE portable hands-free.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or a small advertisement.

Hearts aflutter for the £1,000 April winner

The story so far...

About last Wednesday... I was hoping you weren't going to bring that up. Couldn't we talk about last Saturday instead? But you were so confident that Darren Huckerby, your new signing, was going to score against Wimbledon.

An unsentimental approach and shrewd use of late transfers brought a rich reward for last month's ITF winning manager

When Neil Ritchie of Edinburgh, the overall ITF monthly prize winner for April, describes his occupation as "chicken strangler", it is with the gallows humour which is a perennial necessity for a Hearts supporter.



Good sport: Neil Ritchie, left, about to receive his April manager of the month prize from Hibernian's Bryan Gunn

FAXBACK: YOUR UP-TO-DATE TEAM SCORES. The Times Faxback service provides you with a complete results sheet of your team, showing current and total scores, dates, times and details of transfers...

LEAGUE UPDATES

Table with 4 columns: ITF LEAGUE, PFA PLAYERS' LEAGUE, STUDENTS' LEAGUE, YOUTH LEAGUE. Lists prize amounts and descriptions.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top women's league players.

STUDENTS' LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top students' league players.

YOUTH LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top youth league players.

ITF LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top ITF league players.

PFA PLAYERS' LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top PFA players' league players.

FA CUP LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top FA Cup league players.



Seaman: consistent points scorer for the April winner

INTERNET LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Points. Lists top internet league players.

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS. All 1997-8 matches in the FA Cup, the Scottish League, the premier division and the Women's Scottish Cup count for points.

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Rodney Hobson previews two conferences highlighting concerns of small enterprises

IT required post-haste

WHILE most businesses are worried about whether their computers will crash at the turn of the century...

ing the project, said: "We started work on a number of assumptions, but these were subsequently revised by the parties involved..."

It is two years since their annual conference heard Peter Lilley, then Social Security Secretary, announce the country's biggest Private Finance Initiative in information technology...

The pilot scheme has involved 200 post offices in the North East and the South West. ICL is particularly concerned to ensure that the system will work in the remarkable variety of post offices in the country...

Colin Baker, general secretary of the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters, says: "Resolutions at this year's conference voice concern about when post offices will come online..."

The computerisation project is seen as vital to the rural post offices in particular. Membership of the federation is still dwindling as post offices succumb to the demise of village shops...

Mr Lilley told delegates in 1996 that computerisation would be completed by the end of 1998...

Conference delegates will also protest over Royal Mail plans to sell stamps wholesale to businesses and express concern about the amount of money that the Government creams off from Post Office profits.



The computerisation project is seen as vital to rural post offices

Lively debate expected from star-studded cast

THE battle for the hearts and minds of Britain's small businesses one year into the Tony Blair Labour Government has thrown up what promises to be the liveliest annual conference of the British Chambers of Commerce in years.

Three ministers, a member of the Shadow Cabinet and a former Chancellor will stand alongside the Governor of the Bank of England and key figures from industry during two days of debate in Birmingham next month.

Up to 1,000 delegates are expected to attend a conference that will also reflect the move by the chambers to improve their image and standing. Sessions will be modelled on the Question Time television debates...

Clark, the former Chancellor. The opening debate on employment matters also promises to be lively. Sir Peter Davis, chief executive of Prudential and chairman of the Government's New Deal task force...

Delegates will also have the chance to respond to the Government's transport White Paper, to be published this month.

Conference details are on the conference hotline, 0121-450 4234, or on the Website www.bcc-conference.co.uk.



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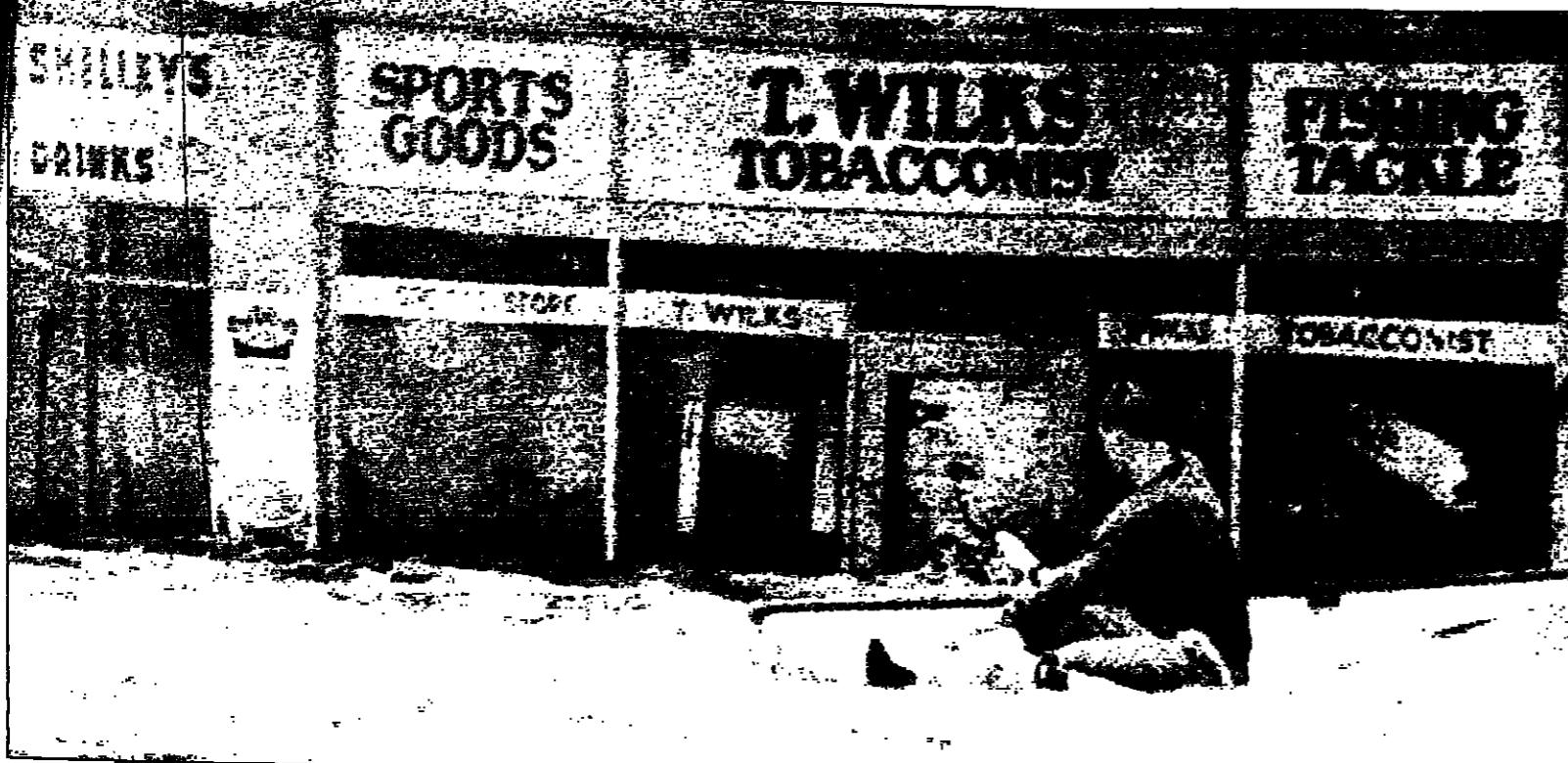
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THE TIMES COURT OF APPEALS Inspect

فكرنا من الأصل

LAW

● BUILDING BILL 43
● LAW REPORT 39



The deluge in the film Newsfront did nobody any good. But perhaps the recent rainclouds in England had a silver lining for one organisation

A flood of new excuses

Martin Mears, a former Law Society President, challenges the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors

The other day the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors (formerly the Solicitors Complaints Bureau) had some good luck. The Cherwell overflowed its banks and flooded the OSS's Leamington Spa headquarters...

has renamed and reshuffled its committees. Old job titles have disappeared, new ones have emerged. The computer systems have been replaced by revolutionary machines that are said to work. The frenzy of reorganisation has been presented in the latest approved management-speak.

been tackled by creating a frontlog - an accumulation of unprocessed new complaints. This is why the organisation has been sending out standard letters telling its customers that it will be 12 weeks before their complaint is even looked at.

having a dirty numberplate. This mentality contributes to the logjam. What are the remedies? A new culture and new attitudes, of course, but - with the same people in place at Leamington Spa - these look unlikely.

Ruling on jokes is no laughing matter

Have you heard the one about the barrister? The professional conduct and complaints committee of the Bar Council has decided that for a barrister to tell offensive jokes is a disciplinary offence.



COUNSEL DAVID PANNICK QC

which barristers conduct themselves away from court and chambers. If a barrister is convicted of fraud or drunken driving, the Bar Council may well decide that such behaviour is a breach of the code of conduct because it is "likely to diminish public confidence in the legal profession or the administration of justice or otherwise bring the legal profession into disrepute".

Eversheds and Frere to merge

EVERSHEDS and Frere Cholmeley Bischoff are to merge. Frere's name will disappear, but that, said Alan Jenkins, the managing partner, "is neither here nor there - the important issue is to provide a high level of service to clients".

INN AND OUTS

Carpenter Street to join Eversheds in the shadow of St Paul's. In the days when it occupied gracious buildings in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Frere's rather prided itself on being west of the City.

A barrister at 18 Red Lion Court chambers has become the first English lawyer to be recruited by the legal charity Avocats sans Frontières to take part in genocide trials in Rwanda.

Equality delayed A LIST of the people the Lord Chancellor's Department "informally" consulted last year

on whether or not to set up a judicial appointments commission is long on judges. The Lord Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, the President of the Family Division, the Vice-Chancellor, the senior law lord, the senior presiding judge, the Council of her Majesty's Circuit Judges and the Association of District Judges were all approached for their opinion on the matter, but though the Commission for Racial Equality and the Equal Opportunities Commission were consulted, lawyers' groups such as the Association of Women Barristers, the Society of Black Lawyers and the Association of Women Solicitors are not on the list.

dismay of women and minority lawyers' groups.

A true contest

THE election for Law Society presidency this summer seems increasingly likely to be contested. Michael Napier and David McIntosh, the senior partners at Irwin Mitchell and Davies Arnold Cooper respectively, are expected to launch a challenge against Michael Mathews and Robert Sayer, the vice and deputy vice-presidents.

But for the time being, they are keeping their powder dry, although Mr McIntosh has conceded that he may stand against Mr Sayer for the post of vice-president and Mr Napier has spoken of being under pressure to stand.

Lord Justice May has won a special award from the Plain English Campaign for a suggestion at the end of an appeal that Latin phrases be abolished from court proceedings. Chrissie Maher, the campaign's director, said: "Latin is a dead language so let's give it a decent burial."



Gypsies: often in need of legal advice

Lured away by the Gypsies

THE CAUSE of gypsy rights has lured Luke Clements from the Hereford practice of Thorpes so he can devote more time to helping Gypsies. Almost 20 years after he joined the firm, Mr Clements, 45, will spend more time as a Research Fellow and co-director of Cardiff Law School's Traveller Research Unit. He has been involved in many cases with Gypsies and is the author of the recently published European Human Rights. He will also be a consultant to Thorpes.

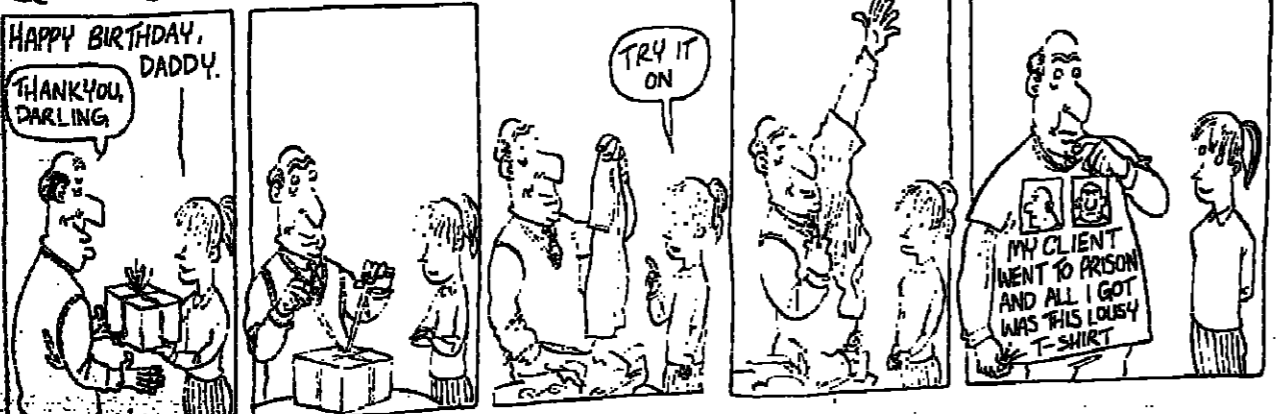
Treves move

VANNI TREVES, senior partner of Macfarlanes and recently appointed chairman (non-executive) of Channel 4, is to stand down from the firm's management, along with Roger Formby, the firm's managing partner. Mr Treves will remain a partner doing corporate work in the firm. He has completed four three-year terms as senior partner, each time with the unanimous backing of other partners. His role will be taken on by Robert Sutton. Mr Formby, who has been managing partner since 1987, will be succeeded by Paul Phippen, a litigation partner.

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4 FIELD COURT

congratulates

Elizabeth Blackburn QC

on her appointment as Queen's Counsel.

We are also pleased to announce that Madeleine Heal (née Clark), formerly in practice in Sydney at the New South Wales Bar, has accepted an invitation to join Chambers. Madeleine Heal is now based in London and will continue to specialise in Intellectual Property law.

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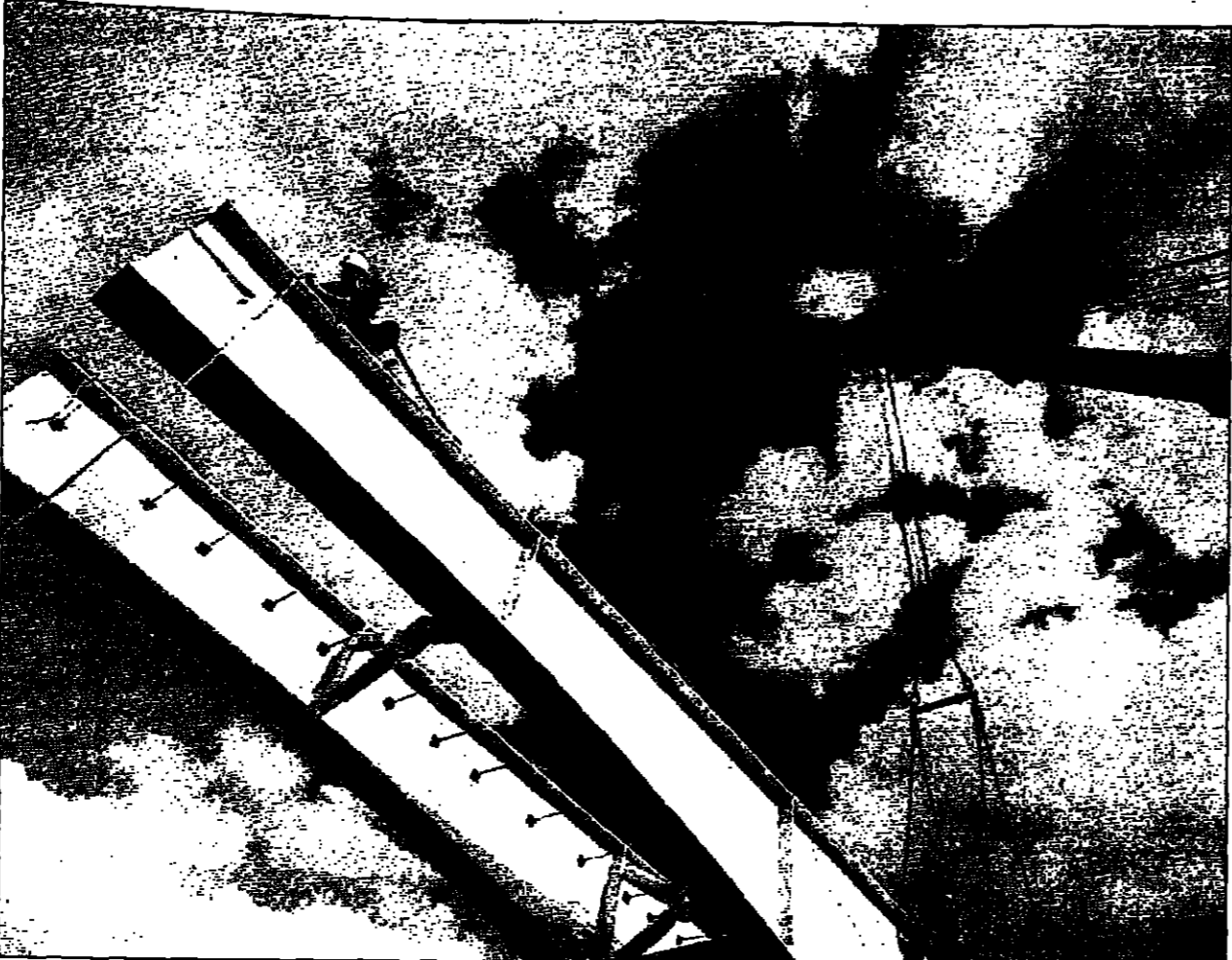
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Quick-settling and concrete

A new 'rough and ready' Act on building disputes will end delays, says John Vasey

On May 1, 1998, a bold experiment in dispute resolution came into effect. Introduced by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, the new regime aims to sweep away the enormous cost and delay of court or arbitration proceedings for most construction-related disputes. Instead, a greatly simplified system of adjudication will lead to an enforceable decision on such disputes within 35 days.



Clear up to the sky: construction-related disputes are not uncommon on big projects, a problem the Government is tackling

The construction industry has become increasingly frustrated at the difficulties in taking even simple disputes to court. The previous Government responded by commissioning a former Conservative MP, Sir Michael Latham, to devise a better system, and also to recommend ways of ending payment abuses, which had become rife. To the surprise of many, the response to Sir Michael's report was the introduction of legislation in 1996. This has now been brought into effect, and enthusiastically supported by Labour's Construction Minister, Nick Raynsford. The Act applies to most construction-related contracts, including agreements with builders, architects and engineers. Significantly, it excludes building work for homeowners. If a new conservatory starts coming away from the house, the homeowner will still need to go through all the problems of taking the builder to court to resolve the situation. However, if the roof of an office block leaks, a remedy can be obtained from an adjudicator very quickly and at low cost.

tract, before any dispute arises, or put forward by a nominating body such as the Royal Institute of British Architects or the Official Referee's Solicitors Association. Adjudicators are encouraged to get to the bottom of disputes by using their own initiative. The legislation does not lay down any strict procedures. Generally, they will involve the preparation of written cases by each side, including supporting documents and any other evidence, followed by short oral hearings. Parties can act on their own behalf if they wish or be represented. In all but the simplest of cases it will be difficult for the adjudicator to make a fully informed decision within the short time allowed. The Government has acknowledged that the system produces "rough and ready" justice. But

it is thought to be a price worth paying to avoid delayed and expensive proceedings. The adjudicator's decision must be complied with, which will often mean money being paid over to the claimants. A regime is expected to lead to an increase in claims. However, over the medium and longer term, it may encourage more amicable settlement of disputes and so reduce the number of claims. An exaggerated claim or a blistering excuse for non-payment could, under the old system, have remained untested for years. The knowledge that an independent assessment can take place within weeks will help to focus minds on the real issues and improve prospects for agreed settlements. The group most pleased with the new regime are subcontractors, who traditionally have suffered from trumped-up excuses for non-payment. Developers are worried that contracts may use the new procedure to press them for higher payments for their work. Insurers of architects and

engineers are particularly concerned at the prospect of complex, perhaps multi-million-pound professional indemnity claims, having to be dealt with within 35 days. Lawyers, too, will have to change their ways. Preparing and presenting the defence of an entire claim within five weeks presents very different challenges from the present typical two-year procedure. The Government has chosen construction as the most adversarial industry to test this new regime. If the trial succeeds, it may be a model for dealing with other commercial disputes. The new system takes further Lord Woolf's proposals for speeded-up civil justice and is part of the same drive to widen access to the law.

The author is a partner in construction and insurance law at Wansbroughs Willey Hargrave.

Once a claim is made, a ruling should follow within 35 days

Flagship Bill sailing towards trouble

Jonathan Evans sees problems ahead for the Competition Bill

An Eldorado for lawyers" was the claim of Lord Kingsland during debate on the Competition Bill. The Department of Trade and Industry's flagship Bill to promote competitiveness, now in the Commons after its passage through the Lords, may be delayed.

Less than three years ago, Richard Caborn, then chairman of the powerful DTI Select Committee and now Minister for the Regions, Regeneration and Planning, said: "UK policy on monopolies is outdated and cumbersome and will have to be changed to bring us in line with the rest of Europe."

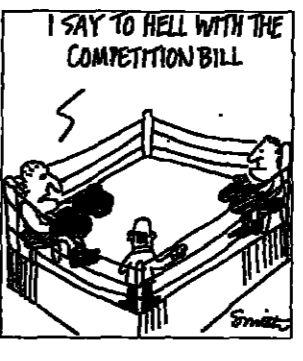
Labour had adopted the committee's reform idea of a single unified competition body, amalgamating the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC), as advocated by Sir Brian Carsberg (then the Director-General). This concept was rejected by the previous Government (in which I had responsibility for competition matters).

In August 1996 we published our draft Bill on tackling cartels and the abuse of market power, signalling a shift from an administrative approach to a prohibition system for dealing with restrictive trade practices along the lines of Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome. We also proposed a strengthening of the powers of the OFT to investigate abuse, and to provide the Director-General with powers to stop anti-competitive behaviour pending the outcome of an MMC inquiry. Against this background, Margaret Beckett arrived at the DTI as President of the Board of Trade on May 2, 1997, and shortly thereafter declared the Competition Bill to be her legislative priority. She turned for assistance to Lord Borrie, Labour's competition guru and a former Director-General of the OFT, who can probably be described as the architect of the current legislation. He is credited with talking Mrs Beckett out of proceeding with her planned "public interest" test for mergers. Lord Borrie had also made clear that he did not share his successor's

enthusiasm for a unitary competition body.

The Government has proposed keeping the two bodies, although the MMC is to be given an additional appeal function from the OFT and renamed the Competition Commission. It will also take on the function of the Restrictive Practices Court.

The Bill prohibits anti-competitive agreements as proposed in the 1996 draft Bill. But it breaks with the previous Government's policy by also introducing a ban on abuses of market power — an as yet undefined "dominant" position in the UK market as a whole



or any local or regional market in the UK — a step beyond the provisions of Article 86. Penalties for breaches of these prohibitions can be severe — up to 10 per cent of total UK turnover. Agreements that fall foul of the prohibitions will be unenforceable, and rights are introduced for third parties — competitors, customers or consumer groups acting on their behalf — to seek injunctions and damages. As well as the significant beefing-up of his powers to investigate anti-competitive agreements and behaviour, the OFT Director-General can be approached for an exemption or for confidential informal guidance on similar lines to those in merger cases. A formal decision by the Director-General can also be re-

quested. Mrs Beckett was well aware of the widespread demand for competition policy reform, and probably anticipated that the Competition Bill would be broadly controversial. The Lords debate has, however, thrown up a number of unexpected hurdles.

First, the Government ran into trouble on the interpretation of predatory pricing, and then was recently successfully ambushed by the community pharmacists' lobby, with Lord Ashley of Stoke, the champion of the disabled, leading the charge. The chemists have had an exemption in relation to the resale price of certain branded medicines, but John Bridgeman, the OFT Director-General, referred this issue to the Restrictive Practices Court in January.

The community pharmacists secured a five-year transitional extension for this agreement from the Lords, which the Government will now have to overturn in the Commons. More than a hundred MPs' signatures on an early day motion supporting the pharmacists, and a glowing appreciation of their role from Frank Dobson at their annual dinner, suggests that some disciplined arm-twisting may be in store.

Concerns are also being expressed over the demarcation of responsibilities between the OFT Director-General and the privatised industry regulators. The Government's policy is to favour "concurrency" between all the regulators, but many feel that the respective roles must be more clearly defined. The focus of debate in the Commons seems likely to fall on these areas, as well as the clarification of the rights of third parties, and the scope of the prohibitions. The Government has yet to put forward its conclusions for vertical agreements. Businesses, meanwhile, must look to see what steps they may need to take. Agreements in existence when the Bill becomes law and continuing beyond 1999 will need to be the focus of careful internal review.

The author is a solicitor and consultant with Everheds's City office. He was responsible for government policy on competition law from 1994 to 1996.

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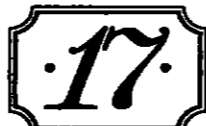
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Bill Morris and Ruth Lea on the employee rights White Paper

A defining moment for our 'one nation' Let firms stay free to decide on recognition

Oftentimes one moment, seen in hindsight, can be said to have defined the future of a government. Norman Lamont emerging on to the steps of the Treasury to announce Britain's withdrawal from the ERM was a defining moment for the last Government, from which it never recovered.

As one who still shares in all the hopes aroused in the country on May 1 last year, I am anxious to see that the Government gets it right in the forthcoming *Fairness at Work* White Paper, since it could well be Labour's defining issue.

I say that, not as the representative of a sectional interest out to gain private advantage, but as one who believes that resolving the issue of rights at work is, firstly, vital to the interests of millions of people, and, secondly, a clear indication as to whether the Government will stick with its vision of an inclusive society. It is therefore central to the future relationship between trade unionists and the Government.

How we arrived at this crossroads is well known by now, but a brief recapitulation of the main points at issue may be helpful. Labour's election manifesto pledged that trade union recognition should be granted where a majority of employees demonstrated, through a ballot, that they wanted it.

We are fortunate to live in a country with a long democratic tradition, where ballots are not unfamiliar creatures. It is widely — indeed, were it not for the CBI. I would say universally — understood that in a ballot the side claiming the support of a majority of those who took part should prevail. In attempting to undermine this simple and clear understanding of democracy, the CBI has started many harems running — perhaps this just reflects the absence of democracy as we know it in the conduct of business and the boardroom.

The CBI's plans would give greater weight to those who abstain than to those who vote. If there is a problem here, I say let it be taken to an acceptable adjudicator, or the representative agency proposed by the TUC, rather than re-write the rules of democracy.

Worst of all, the CBI has argued that "small firms", employing fewer than 50, should be entirely exempt from the legislation, an exception so vast (and one not even hinted at in Labour's manifesto) that the word "loophole" does not do it justice.

About seven million people work in such firms, and often it is they who endure the lowest pay and worst employment practices. Certainly, when my own union ran a low-pay hotline and when the TUC ran a more recent "bad bosses" hotline, many of the calls we took were from people employed in smaller firms and keen for some form of union support. Were these millions sold a pup when they voted for



Bill Morris: fears union case is not being treated on its merits by the Government

Labour in the expectation of union rights? Alas, this approach to union recognition is consistent with the CBI's principled opposition to so many of the changes the country needs. It has opposed a minimum wage, consultation rights for employees and the whole European social charter.

We can be sure that, had the CBI been around in the last century, it would have produced a pile of learned research on the job-destroying impact of banning trade or stopping children up chimneys.

The TUC and the CBI have been engaged in a game of concession-bargaining: the CBI bargains, the TUC is expected to concede. The more the TUC concedes, the more the CBI demands — no sooner had we offered an exemption for firms employing fewer than ten workers, than the CBI urged a level of 50. In the end, the only way to deal with ransom notes from a "concession bargainer" is to just say No.

I am not surprised at the CBI's position. It represents a particular class and a particular

interest. It is the Government that I want to convince. We are not seeking special privileges for trade unions. Simply the "fairness" we have been so long promised. I fear that our case is not being studied on its merits — instead, employee rights are being treated as a sort of political football in a game of po-business machismo, designed to prove how different this Labour Government is from preceding ones. However, I believe that, in standing up for rights at work, trade unions are actually working to help create the "one nation" society and the social cohesion which the Prime Minister has rightly made his standard. The workplace cannot be excluded from that project, nor can the necessary transformation be left to the benevolent employer alone. And while individual employee rights are, indeed, essential, it is false to pose these against trade union rights, since in so many situations it is only through collective support that individual rights can be successfully asserted.

As the organisations for those who seek a collective voice at work, we cannot and will not support legislation which, at best, could be unworkable and, at worst, actually entrenches the worker's lack of rights and makes the task of union organisation still more of a struggle. We have to draw a line here, or trade unions could inadvertently sacrifice the long-term future of employee rights for short-term expediency.

It is because this issue is of such over-riding importance that the T&G believes that the full TUC Congress should be recalled to consider the White Paper. While I have the highest regard for my colleagues on the General Council, we are not the whole movement, merely a part of it. A recalled Congress does not put political tanks on anyone's lawn — it would simply be an exercise in membership participation on the most important decision involving workers' rights for more than 20 years.

Indeed, why stop there? All Labour Party members were invited to vote on the "road to the manifesto" document. The seven million trade unionists could be invited to vote on the White Paper proposals — now there would be an exercise in rank-and-file consultation.

The author is General Secretary of the TBGWU.

There is little doubt that the centrepiece of the long-awaited *Fairness at Work* White Paper will be the contentious issue of compulsory recognition of trade unions for collective bargaining. The position of the Institute of Directors (IoD) is quite clear. We oppose compulsory recognition. Moreover, this position has been fully backed by a recent survey of our members.

Let us, however, emphasise what it is that we oppose. We are not opposed to the principle of recognition provided that managers and directors are free to make the decision. Many companies, especially big manufacturers, already recognise unions for collective bargaining purposes on a voluntary basis. If companies believe that recognising unions is preferable to other options, that is their choice. Other companies do not recognise unions because, for example, they take the view that recognition could be damaging and disruptive to the business itself and, ultimately, to the job prospects of all their employees.

They may feel, too, that to recognise unions would be unfair to their non-unionised employees. This right of choice should stay, and any appeal to employees' "democratic rights and fairness" should instantly be dismissed as irrelevant. Businesses are not political entities and they are not representative bodies (as, incidentally, trade unions — and the IoD — are).

To emphasise this last point, it is worth stating quite clearly that companies are not democracies and that their leaders are not "democratically" accountable. No Directors and managers are appointed to run companies for, and are accountable to, the shareholders, and they have all the responsibilities that this entails. They have moral obligations to the de facto owners of their companies to achieve, as far as they can, the maximum long-term shareholder value of those companies. In trying to achieve that aim, directors have responsibilities to other stakeholders — including employees, suppliers and customers. Of course, they do. But at the heart of any decision taken by any directors is the knowledge that they are dealing with capital entrusted to them by the shareholders.

If directors have responsibility for running the company for its shareholders and "carrying the can" if things go wrong, they should have the control. And they should not be burdened, distracted and delayed by any manifestations of compulsory "industrial democracy". We know of few people who believe that those who have the responsibility for running events should not have fair control over how they run those events. But there is a strange denial, in some quarters at least, of the validity of this law of natural justice when it comes to the issue of compulsory recognition of unions.

It is quite unfair to expect people to assume responsibility



Ruth Lea: says that importing the notion of democracy into companies is flawed

without control. (Many psychological studies confirm that the most stressed people are those with responsibilities who feel they do not have control.) So, directors and managers should clearly be able to choose whether to recognise unions.

We realise, however, that compulsory recognition of unions was a 1997 Labour Party manifesto commitment and accept, with regret, that it will be introduced. The manifesto said:

"People should be free to join or not join a union. Where they do decide to join, and where a majority of the relevant workforce vote in a ballot for the union to represent them, the union should be recognised. This promotes stable and orderly industrial relations." Of course, the devil is in the detail and the debates on what is the "relevant workforce" have already been long and heated — and even before we have seen the White Paper.

We in the IoD have followed the discussions between the CBI and the TUC with considerable interest and note their not insubstantial disagreements. Perhaps I could mention two. The first relates to the difficulties of defining the bargaining unit. The CBI has said that it wishes the bargaining unit to be defined as closely as possible to the existing business structures (which we would support), while the TUC wants the bargaining unit to take into account other criteria, such as the wishes of the workforce concerned. Alas, one can already see the scope for discord here, and the idea that compulsory recognition will promote "stable and orderly industrial relations" (to quote the manifesto) seems all too wide of the mark. On the contrary, any discussions on the definitions of specific bargaining units seem to us to be potentially time-consuming, divisive and disruptive.

The second, and the more widely reported, disagreement relates to the precise definition of the relevant workforce in calculating the majority voting for union representation. The CBI wishes for a majority of all the workforce eligible to vote for representation before a union is recognised. The TUC, on the other hand, wishes for a majority of the workforce actually voting for representation to be enough for union recognition. Clearly the CBI's intention (and I trust I am not misrepresenting them) is to dilute the burden on employers of compulsory recognition and we would say "amen" to that. The criticism that "the CBI's proposals are not really democratic and the TUC's are because, in elections, the majority of those voting usually carries the day" cuts little ice with us. As we have pointed out, the whole notion of democracy in companies is so thoroughly flawed that references to what happens in genuinely democratic situations are quite irrelevant. Speculation about the contents of the *Fairness at Work* White Paper including compulsory recognition remains a hot topic — not least because of the political implications. One of the speculations includes the idea of a requirement for a minimum turnout (with rumours that No 10 may be pushing for a figure as high as 70 per cent) before a recognition vote is valid. We would support this proposal, and, indeed, any other proposal that would lessen the impact of the unfortunate policy of forcing union recognition on unwilling employers.

The author is Head of the Policy Unit of the IoD.

◀ In concession bargaining, the more the TUC concedes, the more the CBI demands ▶

◀ If directors carry the can if things go wrong, they should have the control ▶

Watchdog to spare ITV from criticism as network reforms

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

FOR the first time since 1993 the ITV Network is going to escape serious criticism from the Independent Television Commission when it announces its annual review of performance tomorrow.

The ITC has been critical of many aspects of ITV's performance as a network in the past and of the lack of programming ambition of some companies. Last year, controversially, it said that the spread of popular dramas was having the effect of squeezing serious current affairs and arts programmes to the margins of the schedule.

Under Richard Eyre, the network's new chief executive, ITV is trying to reform its business and regain lost viewers in the battle against the BBC and the satellite and cable channels.

The share prices of the ITV companies could depend on the outcome.

At the end of his first 100 days earlier this year Mr Eyre announced ambitious targets



Eyre: ambitious targets

up to 200 channels of television.

The ITC has decided this year to acknowledge that ITV is in a period of transition and deserves the benefit of the doubt while new more ambitious structures are put in place. Carleton will even escape serious criticism in the annual review for its *Monarchy* debate, although the Commission will say that the concept could have been better implemented.

As Mr Eyre is given a breathing space by the Commission, the ITV chief executive is pushing ahead with reforms. ITV is to get its first new network logo in ten years, although it will share branding with the regional ITV companies.

Last week ITV also announced the creation of a £5 million Network Promotions Unit to produce all of ITV's network on-air promotions and trailers. Until now these have been produced by individual ITV companies.

to win back audiences. This year the aim is to stabilise ITV's share of peak-time viewing at 38 per cent before increasing it to 39 per cent in 1999 and 40 per cent by 2000. The targets are tough because during that period digital broadcasters will be offering

Rush for trust linked to sale of endowments

BY ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

THE popularity of second-hand endowment policies as investments is expected to be underlined today when capital-raising for a new investment trust targeted at endowments closes oversubscribed.

Dresdner RCM Global Investors, the fund manager, is understood to have placed shares worth £25 million with shareholders in its two existing endowment investment trusts and with other investors introduced through financial advisers.

Individual policies — sold through the now thriving second-hand market — usually cost many thousands of pounds. Smaller investors, however, can draw the benefits by saving through an investment trust, which can pool resources and spread investment risk by buying a range of policies.

Some market analysts have questioned whether the increasing demand for second-hand endowments, both from individual buyers and from pooled funds, has driven prices to unsustainably high levels. Fears are that if stock market returns fall in future years some investors could end up being disappointed.

— are attractive because many of the costs associated with endowments are levied in early years, and are paid for by the people who take them out but now need to sell. Second-hand buyers get to share in returns from endowments — where most of the underlying investment is shares — relatively uninhibited by costs.

Individual policies — sold through the now thriving second-hand market — usually cost many thousands of pounds. Smaller investors, however, can draw the benefits by saving through an investment trust, which can pool resources and spread investment risk by buying a range of policies.

Pay-TV penetration 'to double after launch of digital'

BY OUR MEDIA EDITOR

PENETRATION of pay-television will double in the next eight years, driven by three competing forms of digital television launching this year, according to a new study by Merrill Lynch.

The UK is scheduled to be the first country in the world where pay TV will be driven simultaneously by digital satellite, digital terrestrial and digital cable. As a result Neil Blackley, Merrill's media analyst, is forecasting in the study that pay penetration will rise from 24.7 per cent at the end of 1997 to 49 per cent by 2005.

This will mean big business for Flextech, which provides channels to all three digital services. It is also good news for Carlton Communications, whose chairman is Michael Green. Carlton has a 50 per cent stake in BDB, the main digital terrestrial service. Cable companies such as Cable & Wireless Communications and Telewest will also benefit.

Merrill Lynch also sees long-term growth for BSkyB,



Green: chairman of Carlton

in which News International, the owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake. Merrill estimates that of the 49 per cent of the population who will sign up for digital pay-TV 19.5 per cent will go for satellite, 21.5 per cent cable and 8.25 per cent digital terrestrial.

BSkyB is planning a "soft" or limited launch of digital satellite at the end of next month with the "Blackbox decoders" offered first to existing subscribers before a full commercial launch in September.

The digital equipment will be subsidised for the first two years by BIB, a consortium made up of BT, BSkyB, Matushita and the Midland Bank. The expected retail price will be £199. The policy is likely to cost BIB £265 million.

BSkyB subscribers are going to be offered an extra subsidy, and Mr Blackley expects the price, before installation, to come down to £179.

On digital terrestrial, Merrill says some parts of the UK will not be able to get the service and the company may have to give refunds to BDB purchasers or recommend cable or satellite connections.

The stockbroker expects there to be 750,000 new subscribers to pay-TV this year and 1.1 million next year; there were 680,000 last year.

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TODAY Interims: British Petroleum (G1), Sella Group. Final: M&G Group, Tate & Lyle, Wills Corroon Group (G1), Finisla: Carbo, Lambert Smith Hampton, Ocean Wilson (Holdings), J Sainsbury, Scottish Power, Securities Trust of Scotland, Time Products, Whitbread. Economic: Halifax house price survey (April), Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply service sector survey (April), Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders new car registrations (April), Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee two-day meeting begins.

TOMORROW Interims: Anglo Irish Bank, BSkyB (G2), M&G Group, Tate & Lyle, Wills Corroon Group (G1), Finisla: Carbo, Lambert Smith Hampton, Ocean Wilson (Holdings), J Sainsbury, Scottish Power, Securities Trust of Scotland, Time Products, Whitbread. Economic: Halifax house price survey (April), Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply service sector survey (April), Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders new car registrations (April), Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee two-day meeting begins.

THURSDAY Interims: Avon Rubber, Cox Insurance Holdings (G3), Glasgow Income Trust, Royal Bank of Scotland, Sanderson Group, Shell Transport & Trading (G1), Glasgow Communications (G1), Finisla: Abbeycrest, Prowling, Raymond, Sierbright Holdings. Economic: New construction orders for three months to March, housing starts for three months to March, Confederation of British Industry's distributive trades survey (April), Bank of England announces interest rate decision.

FRIDAY Interims: Exeter Investment Group. Final: Aude Properties, Cairngorms Building Society, Hilldown Holdings, Value & Investment. Economic: no UK data scheduled for release.

Table with columns: Bank, Buy, Sell, Australia \$, Austria Sch, Belgium Fr, Canada \$, Cyprus Cyp2, Denmark Kr, Finland Mkk, France Fr, Germany Dm, Greece Lr, Hong Kong \$, Iceland Isl, India Ru, Israel Shk, Italy Lit, Japan Yen, Korea Won, Luxembourg Gl, New Zealand \$, Norway Kr, Portugal Esc, S Africa R, Spain Pta, Sweden S, Switzerland Fr, Turkey Lira, USA \$.

ScottishPower's aims in spotlight

SCOTTISHPOWER: The company's £66 million acquisition of Demon Internet last week illustrated the group's determination to diversify into other areas, both at home and abroad. The group will tomorrow unveil results for the year to March 31, with brokers looking for a profit range of £630 million to £640 million, against £584 million last time. SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the company's joint broker, is forecasting £632 million, while James Capel is looking for £638 million. Earnings per share are expected to be about 40.5p.



Ian Robinson, chief executive, is controlling ScottishPower's diversification on many fronts

Brokers are sure to question the group about its ambition to expand overseas. Earlier this month, ScottishPower pulled out of talks with Florida Progress, which owns Florida Power, supplying power to 1.3 million homes. Florida Progress has a market capitalisation of about \$5 billion and was one of several possible partners said to have been looked at by the group. ScottishPower, of which Ian Robinson is chief executive, is involved in numerous regulatory reviews and consultations on legislation. That means that it may be tempted to concentrate on what it is doing for customers rather than shareholders.

These results will include the first full contribution from Southern Water. The company is also in telecoms through Scottish Telecom and will be involved in the first wave of electricity deregulation through owning Manweb. The domestic gas market was deregulated this month and Scottish has made clear its commitment to the market by trying to be the first utility to break into the monopoly on gas storage held until now by BG. In February, it signed an agreement to convert a near-empty Yorkshire gasfield into a storage facility. A dividend of 20p is forecast.

J SAINSBURY: Full-year results tomorrow are likely to show that the group's big rival, Tesco, is increasing its lead in the battle for market share. A disappointing performance at Christmas is expected to have taken its toll of the sales revival that most brokers had been hoping for. Pre-tax profits are expected to be £710 million to £735 million, compared with £651 million last time. BT Alex Brown, the broking arm of Bankers Trust, is looking for a final figure

of £724 million, with earnings per share up from 23.2p to 26p. BT Alex Brown expects a 9 per cent rise in supermarket profits and a solid performance by the Homebase DIY operation, which continues to enjoy a revival. Gross margins are likely to have increased on the supermarket side by almost half a percentage point, aided by a bigger margin on petrol. Homebase will see a big improvement in sales as a result of the merger with Texas. Operating profits are expected to grow by £16 million, to £60 million. Savacentre's lacklustre Christmas performance justified the move to integrate it in the main business. The fledgling banking operation will have seen a small loss, of

not be enough to offset any further decline in upstream operations. They forecast clean replacement net income of £465 million to £580 million, down from £755 million last time. Exploration and production will remain depressed by the weak oil price, and mild weather will have restrained gas volumes. The lower oil price and BP's joint venture with Mobil will benefit refining and marketing in Europe. The payout is likely to be held at the 5.75p paid out during the final quarter of 1997. That compares with 5.25p for the corresponding period last year.

TATE & LYLE: The profit downgrades preceding the half-year results due tomorrow leave shareholders little to look forward to. Brokers forecast pre-tax profits of £70 million to £75 million, compared with a pre-exceptional £113.6 million for the corresponding period. Operating profits are expected to be down by about a third, to £100 million. The payout is likely to be held at 18p. Staley, the group's troubled North American starch and sweeteners operation, will have seen a shortfall of almost 30 per cent, at £50 million. Last year's comparative included the last quarter of 1996, when margins were acceptable. Staley has had to contend with the introduction of seasonal profits. Domino and Western will also see profits fall, reflecting lower volumes and margins.

Nearer home, currency fluctuations will have played havoc with translation of European profits and the group's cash margins. Currency will offset benefits expected from closing Grecock. Meanwhile, Anylum has run into commissioning problems, and starch gross margins remain flat.

WHITBREAD: Final results due out tomorrow will show the pub and inn side still producing the lion's share of profits. They now account for more than half of the group total. Acceleration of the new opening programme and strong like-for-like sales growth mean that inn's contribution will be at the top end of industry performance. Managed pubs will have a small dip in profits after disposals, but like-for-like sales should be up. Brokers expect group profits of £340 million to £360 million, up from £317 million. The payout should rise by 9 per cent, to 26p.

US rate rise looks likelier than UK hike

Markets in the UK are this week likely to be more anxious about the threat of an interest rate rise in the US than about the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee meeting due to take place tomorrow and Thursday. A series of gloomy UK manufacturing sector surveys and weakish other data have dampened expectations that British interest rates will rise. This background, coupled with the unconfirmed report that Charles Goodhart—a previously hawkish member of the MPC—switched his vote at the last meeting, have fuelled the view in the market that rates have almost certainly reached their peak.

The outlook in the US is more uncertain, despite the American stock market's recovery at the end of last week after weaker than expected data. The US employment figures, due out on Friday, will provide the main moments of anxiety. MMS International, the forecasting group, expects non-farm payrolls to have risen by a robust 240,000 in April. Growth in average hourly earnings is expected to tick up from 0.3 per cent to 0.4 per cent, the kind of increase that would fray some market nerves ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee meeting scheduled for May 19.

Earlier in the week, publication of the Fed's Beige Book should provide more clues to Fed thinking on rates and on whether, as some reports claimed last week, the hawks have begun to gain the upper hand. Back in the UK, data is thin on the ground. The CBI distributive trades survey, due on Thursday, will offer the first snapshot of retail sales in April. Figures on high street sales have been weakish in the past couple of months, but analysts believe that a strong consumer credit figure for March could indicate a bounce back in April, although poor weather last month may have restrained certain sectors. Tomorrow, the Chartered Institute of Purchasing's supply services survey will be examined for evidence of the booming service sector beginning to slow.

ALASDAIR MURRAY

The Sunday Times: Buy United Biscuits, MY Holdings, Thomas Jordan, The Sunday Telegraph, Buy J Sainsbury, ScottishPower, Quality Software Products. The Express on Sunday: Buy BTP David Brown, Le Riche Group, The Mail on Sunday, Buy Alders, Shoves, Independent on Sunday, Buy Debenhams, MMT Computing.

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SHARES returned to record levels in New York yesterday, having rallied for the third day running as last week's concerns about a possible rise in interest rates continued to fade. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 70.75 points to 9,217.82 at midday, having been 115 ahead at one point. The best close was 9,184.94 on April 21. In Germany the DAX index closed at 5,337.75, up 96.52, while French shares rose more than 2 per cent. The CAC 40 index was up 93.33 to 3,974.25, within a stone's throw of its closing and all-time highs. Other European stock markets were sharply higher including Italy where the All-share Mibex index rose more than 4 per cent to close at 24,062. In Bangkok, however, stocks plunged 2.8 per cent before the resignation of the Governor of the Bank of Thailand. The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) composite index dropped 11.42 points to close at 400.71, while the SET 30 selected index dipped 1.01 points to finish at 28.55. Meanwhile, Indian share prices rose more than 3 per cent on expectations of a business-friendly budget.

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مكتبة من الأصيل

The question that worries British Biotech shareholders who may press for changes in management is this: who can they get to run the troubled drug development company?

Unhealthy lack of leadership candidates

Paul Durman on the options at British Biotech

The revelations of the past two weeks have knocked the credibility of Keith McCullagh, chief executive, in the eyes of the City's analysts. The Stock Exchange and the US Securities & Exchange Commission are already pursuing investigations that relate to British Biotech's allegedly misleading statements to the market and tardy disclosure of disappointments in its drug trials.

The affair closely, while the European Medicines Evaluation Agency is taking the unprecedented step of publishing its objections to approving British Biotech's pancreatic drug, Zacetex.

11-strong board has been called into question by their reluctance to take the Millar affair seriously, trying to pass off his concerns as "matters of no substance or purely personal opinions".

Mr Ralsman looks particularly vulnerable, having accused Dr Millar, who has a distinguished medical pedigree, of being ill-informed. Former directors say that Mr Ralsman — paid £73,000 last year by a company which had 400 employees and £29 million of annual losses — has backed Dr McCullagh since he joined the

board in 1995. The other non-executives include Henry de Ruitter, who worked with Mr Ralsman at Shell, and John Wilkerson, a healthcare consultant whose firm received £141,000 from British Biotech in 1995-96.

There are also question marks over the executive directors. Pam Kirby arrived from Astra with a good reputation 20 months ago, but her role in building a commercial infrastructure for a company with no products is at the heart of Dr Millar's criticisms of British Biotech's strategy. Malcolm Fallon, finance director, has kept a low profile since arriving last year: the

company's account of his past career neglected to mention that Polly Peck and Lowndes Queensway, two of the biggest financial disasters of the past decade, are among his previous employers.

Names seek vote of no confidence in Lloyd's chief

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

LLOYD'S names, a group which includes some of the richest people in the country, are calling for the resignation of the Lloyd's of London's chief executive at a council meeting tomorrow.

Lloyd's was "inflammatory, ill-judged and irresponsible", says Christopher Stockwell, chairman of the Lloyd's Names Association, has written to members of Lloyd's Council urging them to take action. He said: "Mr Sandler, as CEO, can have no personal views; his speech was unauthorised by Council, he should go. If it was cleared by the chairman, they should both go in a vote of no confidence by the council."

Mr Stockwell said he had received "a number of telephone calls from council members indicating that they are taking the matter very seriously". The row threatens to overshadow Lloyd's results, which are published today and which show a record profit of £1.15 billion for the 1995 year of account. This compares with a profit on the same basis for 1994 of £1.1 billion.

Economists warn against rate rise

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

A FURTHER rise in British interest rates would risk serious deflation next year, according to an influential group of economists styling themselves "the Shadow Monetary Policy Committee."

The MPC proper meets tomorrow and on Thursday and is widely expected to leave UK rates unchanged. The Shadow committee, which met to discuss interest rates under the auspices of the Institute of Economic Affairs on April 23, concluded that there is now firm evidence that the economy is slowing and that another rise in rates now would be inappropriate.

earlier and that the MPC had acted too late to stop a higher rate of inflation becoming ingrained in the system. The committee said that it would be "unwise" for the Bank of England to talk down the value of the pound because of the danger of higher inflation.



Three cheers: Tim Fearn, finance director, Colin Stevens, managing director, and Philip Snook, right, of Ambishus

THREE former executives of the Magic Pub Company, sold for £200 million to Greene King in 1996, will this week bring their new vehicle, the Ambishus Pub Company, to the stock market.

Ambishus group ready for flotation

Led by Philip Snook, former managing director of Magic, the trio plan to use a listing on the Alternative Investment Market to build a substantial presence in the managed pub sector through a series of acquisitions.

November by Mr Snook, Colin Stevens and Tim Fearn through the purchase of 31 pubs from Regent Inns and Grosvenor Inns for £16 million. Some of the purchase price was in the form of shares, giving Grosvenor a 17.5 per cent stake and Regent 8.5 per cent.

ic Pub, Mr Snook, who is non-executive chairman of Ambishus, has 8 per cent. The broker to its flotation, which will capitalise the group at just under £10 million, is Sutherland and the adviser is Rea Brothers. The shares are expected to jump to a premium when they start trading on AIM on Friday.

SFI plan to expand adult club concept

By DOMINIC WALSH

SFI GROUP, the pub operator formerly known as Surrey Free Inns, is to develop its second For Your Eyes Only (FYEO) table dancing venue en route to an eventual demerger.

which will be fitted out at a cost of £650,000. The premium is being paid in the form of new SFI shares.

Profits ahead 18% at Miller Group

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THE Miller Group, Scotland's largest privately owned construction group, saw an 18 per cent rise in pre-tax profit last year, with the property development division enjoying a particularly good year.

cent to £13.4 million. The dividend was up 66 per cent to 10.3p (6.2p) and shareholders' funds increased to £83.9 million (£76.2 million).

Crédit Lyonnais nears EU deal

By JANET BUSH

HAVING won the battle for the soul of the European Central Bank, France appeared to be making headway on another controversial issue yesterday. French ministers have moved closer to a deal that would allow them to pump more subsidies into state-owned bank Crédit Lyonnais in order to privatise it.



Van Miert warned that time was running out for a deal

Mr Van Miert would report to the EU executive tomorrow. But it hinted his tone had suddenly become friendlier.

At the heart of the negotiations are strict Commission rules on state aid and Mr Van Miert made it plain on Saturday that any deal had to stand up to the scrutiny of others in

the EU. He then claimed: "The solution must be solid and we must be able to defend it against those who complain and the competition," warning that time is running out to reach a deal.

Boeing buys stake in Mobile Com

Boeing, the world's largest aerospace group, has bought an equity stake in Mobile Communications, the privately held US company that is building Ellipso, the satellite phone system. Ellipso will offer affordable mobile telephone services, digital data transfer, fax, paging, voice mail and messaging from 2001.

Governor quits

The Governor of Thailand's central bank has resigned to avoid being sacked amid scathing criticism of alleged mismanagement at the height of last year's financial turmoil.

Top pay

Sanford Well, chief executive of Travelers Group and co-chairman designate of the merged Citigroup, received \$28 million in total remuneration, making him America's highest-paid chief executive, a survey published in Forbes magazine claims.

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WORD-WATCHING section with answers from page 34. It includes definitions for TYPDONT, MIDREX, CAGOLE, and SCUZZY, along with a SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE.

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